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"ONLY A CHILD."

BY DR. C. D. GARDETTE.

"She is only a child," you say; – only a child!"
Lent now a few years to gladden and redeem your days.
When that young faith convinced her last evening, you smiled,
And cried, – La! how tenil the dear children leave grown!"

Yet you know that next autumn she passes sixteen.
And that Death in a rain in the eye of his new-born threat thine innocents fly to none new – Gonna
In your memories, of course, and in discourse no more!

For whom? that by such a transparent disguise
Your vanity still can to merely beguiled –
And destiny for shame! that a motion can gains
The innocents she makes at the cost of her child!

Yet fret not the nature who lives at your feet,
They laugh at the folly they seem to ignore;
Once you near their sleep we were sure their
soon
To dreams you, you'd play the soft puppet no more!

That woman is lowest who longest shall keep
Her freshness of heart; and her truth, and her
And the knighthood homage a mother can reap
Is that she receives through the bloom of her
child!

NORWOOD;

OR

VILLAGE LIFE IN NEW ENGLAND.

BY CHARLY WARD ARMSTRONG.

[Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1867, by Robert Bonner, in the Clerk's Office of the National Church for the District of New York.]

CHAPTER XXXVII.

SUPPER – AN OLD AND SHATTERED.

When Auburn days come, Nature, like a restless merchant, changes its manner – from thrift and bustling industry to languid leisure and to ostentatious luxury. The sun rises later and sets earlier than when it had all the summer days on hand and was playing universal husbandman – throwing its sun-beaming rays, and no bird-singing, – which is a purely domestic arrangement, discharged on the birds' part to bring beans in the family which the husbandman has raised, and laid aside as soon as the young birds are off their hands. Morning's come fleeced in frost, which hangs over streams and low, moist places. The sun plays with them, but they perish in his arms. A few belated flowers yet keep watch, and shudder in nature, which flings the fields, star the edges of forests, and, like a huntsman of a feast, spurs boon upon making up last list. At night, crickets and katy-dids strike their shrill trills, and fill the air with stridulous sounds. Over all the shrinking fields, the trees lift up their gorgeous foliage, and, like those of the war on the marriage-bell and the rebellion, they shine out in glorious apparel.

The hills, forest-clad, are become the Lord's banquet seats, and, like Jonah, they are framed in a coat of many colors. October days, short between incidents, reach higher into the vault than any days of the year; and through them the reserve seems to look with profound sadness, as one who, in the calm of age, meditates on all the mistakes of his past life and solemnly thinks upon the unknowing future. Along the brown rows, where seeds and late berries may be found, birds hop slowly, as if ashamed to be seen, for then they will change their solitary ways and collect in bands. To-day, the birds will review with them; to-morrow, there will not be one left, and they will be picking their food made rapacious of solitude south.

In the gay autumn of autumn, Burton Cathcart, now released from his military service, returned with his gun. Sometimes he brought home from the hills his bag full of squirrels, and sometimes from the husky coverts he secured many brace of partridges; and on such days he wandered all day without once firing his gun.

Burton loved food sports, but was so keenly fond he chased through the woods and coverts without observation. He delighted to trace the prints of lichen on stones, or the exquisite moment in dainty soft shaded wools. Many squirrels fell and hill while he stood under the yellow-leaved but trees shelling the sweet nuts which they had last maples, saraler, pink and yellow. He remembered what Dr. Hyerwood had said of collecting, and stretched on a dry knoll, to nonplus by for a long time looking up into the bare arched trees, tracing imaginary groupings, or listening to the low sounds of the winds that rustled through the trees, and cast down to the ground hailstones of yellow leaves, on which they had not been playing. So silent and so immovable did he lie, and so long, that the squirrels forgot to be shy, descended to the ground and played for sizable pranks before him, or sprang from branch to branch overhead, barking and chattering in full security. Ah, those great Gardens of God! – October woods!

It was his purpose, by the middle of October, to Cambridge to attend a course of lectures upon law.

Meanwhile, he was at home again, – living free, as in a paradise, – yet the event of his boyhood, visiting the haunts which his early experience had made dear to him. He recalled the fishes which rose and alike had so often his mind the old farm-house.

But when he thought of its dairy now, and of Mrs. Hathorne's, these memories seemed like some fairy tale, read in a book, rather than an actual thing in which he himself had been a living actor.

But young Cathcart would was not wholly a sentimental sympathy with the changing year, the shortening days, the flight of birds and the dying of flowers. He had not been unobservant of his friend's demeanor. He fancied that he perceived in Miss Wentworth a growing reserve in Heywood's attentions. He resisted the impression stoutly. He cast it out with a resolute effort. It returned again. When he was alone in all ease and remiss, a forbidden thought, in spite of all its efforts, will play about it as at night a moth writhe about a lamp; and, like this foolish moth-ardor, the more it is hurt by the flame through which it dashes, the more irresistible seems the attraction, until, singed, ruined and sore, the poor thing falls, exhausted, up beneath the light which lured it to its destruction.

It is not to be imagined that Cathcart had for the several years you lived in a mirthful dream of hope, while at the same time he had taken no decisive steps to secure his position in Miss Wentworth's regard.

Until he was established in life, or had a more prospect of it, he felt sure that it would be uncertainly not wise, to disclose to Miss Wentworth the secret hope of his life. A more hopeless and less reticent nature could scarcely have met his object at his supreme affection. Some way or week without disclosing his feelings. Some moment of ungovernable enthusiasm would be likely to draw from him the secret. Once, any one suspicioning glance would be likely to bring what the tongue faltered to tell. Even in a nature as self-restrained and silent as Burton Cathcart's, this long growing secret have ended itself in some unexpected disclosure, had he not marked out for himself a clear line and followed it with unswerving resolution. He had already learned an invaluable secret, that one-half of the troubles of life may be prevented, and of the troubles that arise one-half may be alleviated, by Occupation. Indeed, in the school as unlimited measure of his time and thought – but whatever time could be wrung from sleep and unavoidable occupation he had to be bestowed upon the study of law. But his school was endeavor. His legal preparation, he knew, for his bar what has been found sufficient to set up many a successful lawyer. But it was not enough for his ambitious to succeed. After another year spent at Cambridge he hoped to have laid a foundation on which he could build for life. When, therefore, during this summer, he had written Haywoods unconscious interest in Miss Wentworth's family, he could not forbear unkindness. The matter was not helped by himself. Talk's affectionate solicitude.

"Look here, Burton, what is your opinion of that southern fellow that's come to live at Church-acre?"

"My opinion, Tommy, is very favorable. He is a perfect gentleman and a lovable person. I think very highly of him."

"Well, I suppose he is. By the way you and he will round together. They say he's gold to Northwood's daughter. I'm told he's going to consider it a matter of duty to marry her. Look here, Burton, he's nothin' but a poor fellow, a gold dressed dolt. I'm told he's not worth a dollar for all it does. But I guess that southern chap wants a lovely name money."

"I should hope so, Tommy. Money is useful in its way, but it takes more than that to make a man."

"Well, that's some folks thinks they have the right to the best of everything; just because they've got money they think they've got all. I'll bet Northwood father-in-law goes down in Dr. Wentworth's gift. But he's such an often as he goes there, than it's a sort of ullin' that doctor-stuff and that goes to one."

Burton knew that Tommy Talk's judgments of men were usually unmistaken, and these hints fell in with his own fears. Yet he had no wish to make Tommy his confidant in the matter of his future. The color came slightly to his cheek and he was silent.

"It's my opinion, that Miss Rose knows who she likes," added Tommy Talk, encouraged by the same time nodding his head corner-wise several times, and winking at the fire with unusual solemnity.

"Is it possible she does," said Burton. "How intensely stupid she is!"

"There was that Boston fellow that was here, you remember, some months ago, and it was from the first that he could n't catch that lord. Why, you see, I would n't give a pin for either of 'em; but after a little while I let 'em swing. I see that she hadn't any use for him, and I told Burton so. Miss Rose won't choose below her."

Burton did not care to pursue the conversation with Tommy Talk; but, except by an abrupt change of subject, he could not avoid it. At the moment that any one showed an anxiety to avoid any topic, Tommy seemed upon it with assiduity of a terrier, and stood it and chased it to the utmost extremity.

"I kinder think it's another thing with this southern fellow," he resumed, after a pause given him by his proper name. "I've seen 'em a good deal since he's been here, and I've noticed that she sort o' holds back and don't look at him so straight and honest as she does at some other folks. And she gives him a chance, too; and he's always hangin' round, so you can't get at her."

To be sure, it's a great place to go to, and every body is to have them; but, then, 'old Tommy with a knowing wink, "there's a difference, you know. If she and others do, even some of the best men of any fellow that's come along, then all signs fail, that's all."

And Tommy renewed his bows at the ground in the most solemn and emphatic manner.

Every word was a confirmation of Burton Cathcart's fears. They irritated him like the spines of nettles.

"Look, Tommy, I promise you are a bore. Miss Rose is a lady, and I respect her as such."

Tommy drew himself up to his full height, and turning his face directly on Burton, without any sting in his tone or banter in his manner, said:

"Burton, my boy, I've known you ever since you were so high. I took to you naturally. I've just been prouder of you than I ever was of any thing on ship or shore; and if I could see you married to Rose, I would give a wink if I didn't live an hour afterward. Take me so, my boy, for you and me to be covering things. I know ye better'n you do yourself. Let me tell ye, you keep too shut up. There's a heap of

"I MAN RIDE, S. THERE THAT IS SUCH MISERY OF THAT NORTHERN FRAZER THAT'S COME TO LIVE AT CHURCH-ACRE!"

things in you that you'd be better to get out. What sort of a room isn't where the fire hasn't any chimney. Although he knew that his unbounded audacity would lead him to threat in his remarks upon any man's business for the mere pleasure which he seemed to take in the exercise of his shrewdness, yet, in his own case, Burton knew he was and almost unconscious affection which old Tommy bore to him. He was also affected by the fact that the old man, hanging on the skirts of society, poor, and now growing every year more and more feeble, had evidently been watching for his interest, during years of absence, with paternal fidelity. Besides all this, a proud and sensitive nature finds it far easier, often, to speak confidingly to one in a station below him than to an equal or a superior.

Whatever may have been the influences moving him, Burton felt that it would be a great relief to him on another's judgment.

"Well, Uncle Tommy, what would you do if you were to my place?"

"Now that's sensible like, Burton, my boy. I'd go right to that fellow, and ask him plump what he's after. If he's just foolin' round for pleasure, and don't mean nothin', and that there's other folks lives in this world as well as him, and if he is, he's wrong. Then, this woman has got to choose between us, that's all."

"Yes, that's all," said Burton, with intense earnestness. "I've let too much time slip already."

"That's it, – you're too slow." Then, with a brief relapse into his former solemnity, Tommy Talk added: "I'd surprise you'd see him this very night, and I'd do it right off. Now, my boy, I'll take a ball that some way it'll fall straight."

The best advice in the world may be ruined in the execution. And the execution of a delicate matter, requiring tact, is the condition of a man's faculties. On some days the mind comes in a gale of spirit, as the sun in a cloudless morning. There is neither cloud nor haze. The thoughts and feelings move in unison, and the tongue, touched from within, like a magnet, has drawn to it feeling words and sentences. It no longer moves like a tangling plow, heavily and slowly, but dashes lightly and glances from topic to topic as sunlight from dew drop to dew drop.

Then comes the cloudy days. Ill-assorted thoughts present for themselves a disagreeable utterance. We spoil whatever we touch. We make a botch of everything. The unfortunate one must defer his observations when clouds are in the sky. In one of the most delicate operations of mechanics, the workmen will not begin a piece of work when he is told that he's hand is dead." Well-lawyer has not just cause because in some before the court and jury with his hand wrenched and his whole body jaded by long continued and exhausting excitement? What a doctor has not just patients by being called, after sleepless nights, with a small brain, to a case requiring insight, precision, and instant action? What minister has not spoiled a good sermon by a poor sermon, because the faithful had come round and in bad health, in the act of naturals and indolence? Skillful surgeons have not refused to operate, when they have not stretch delicately to skin the surface with the Scissors of a feeling, fluttering fly?

Enough. Burton slept little after this interview with Tommy Talk. When he awoked, he woke with only half of himself, and that his poorest part. But the impulse of the night before remained.

Burton left Tommy Talk resolved to see Heywood and to have an understanding with him. He went to Mr. Chandler's house. He already in his walk thither his purpose was somewhat shaken. For, as he reflected more he would break the matter to his friend, he began to see so many difficulties that his purpose wavered.

"I shall ask him what his intentions are towards Miss Wentworth! What if he should reply by asking me on what grounds I inquire? Do I has a father and mother; have they deputed me to watch over their daughter's welfare? Or he may say, Are you an accepted suitor of Miss Rose? If not, on what ground do you interfere?" What business have I at any rate to meddle with Heywood's affair in this matter? there is nothing in my relations to Rose which makes it improper for any other gentleman to solicit her affection. What would Rose think if she knew that I had interrogated Heywood about his attention to her? She would have a good reason for being angry with me. It would be an impertinence. I could never look her in the face afterward if she knew it."

So reasoning, he would have gone past, without calling, but Heywood saw him, and called out:

"Burton, come in! Where do you keep yourself lately? Are you hidden in the woods, or have you gone home to live like a hermit? That are you doing now-a-days? Since the school was given up I hardly see you any more. By the way, what a splendid fellow the doctor is! But he ought to be a preacher in some college, when talking in the proper vestibule! At his house I think there is a little too much of it."

"Yes, I suppose so," said Burton, without interest.

"That's the mischief of it. We young folks were a good time. But as soon as they have him speaking, off goes Rose, and off go everybody, and we have to go, too. How did you enjoy the other evening?"

"Very much, – I was not in good trim. Are you going to the grand rustling party next week?"

"Of course I am. Miss Rose has laid injunctions upon me to that effect. I've been making little visits of late, and do we young folks not? Rose and my sister stones which they have not already had in their possession."

Burton, who had started rather fiercely on his errand, returned with a sense of having emerged a great blunder.

"The reason," said he to himself, "of acting without reflection. My own way in the best, and I'm a fool. I've built over my hopeless on my one, and act upon his suggestion, without inquiring whether it will keep my hopes or not counsels, and act upon my own proper judgment, especially; I do not think I shall go to Tommy Talk again. Fool that I was to let him see—"

Just all, he knew it before. A stranger to man!—full of experience and of wisdom, of which he makes playthings—never uses them soberly for himself. I cannot hide anything from him. But I can keep him myself—shall I speak with my mother? Why should I? What can she give me? She knows my mind already. It will only be another cloud on her mind, and I have enough already. I have no trouble in silence, and why not now? If God answers human thoughts and purposes with an element of his own wisdom, all will come right."

Confidence and tenuous strengthened of feeling wrote a mental physical condition of the brain. It becomes at once fertile and pure. It pours out an endless abundance of thought and emotion, but without variety or texture. The same feeling rises and breaks, only to bubble up again, just as certain the same thought, with a greed a hundred times by the same process, is brought round to itself. Like a mill-wheel, it circle, coming back to its starting place, and moving a narrow round, until the mind seems like a clock, whose weights pull at the wheels and move the hands round and round the dial, day and night, with perpetual breathless.

It was in vain that Burton Cathcart sought to control his mind, so long as he remained at home, with the leisure of vacation and in the presence of those objects which wrought such disturbance to his strength.

His father had long wished Burton to visit several of the remote western States, where he had invested some money in land, to examine the various tracts, ascertain their quality, position and prospects, arrange for the proper settlement of taxes, and, in one or two instances, reclaim some small parcels that had been sold by mistake of agents, been sold for taxes.

All day long after seeing Heywood he had turned his duties over and over in his mind, till he was weary of them, of himself, and of life. But all night he repeated the process, whether dreaming or waking. As the next day dawned, Burton awoke from a short sleep by hearing some one say, "Go west." At any rate, he thought he heard the sentence, though the springing up on one was present. But the impression was strong that he had heard a real voice. The project stood out before him with extensive charges. It would occupy up his surveys intrusion, give him an opportunity of seeing something of his native land, and satisfy that love of novelty and adventure which every healthy mass of nettle is apt to have.

Before he had fairly dressed himself, Burton had settled the matter. When his father came in to breakfast, Burton said with some suddenness:

"Father, I am going out west, and if you will trust me out for instructions, I will attend to your business."

Before anshers everything was prepared, and early on the next day Burton was on his way to the railroad.

Meanwhile, the arrangements had been made for a grand inviting expedition on the week succeeding Heywood's party. The latter proposed at his start took every one by surprise. Why did Burton Cathcart go west? He knew all at least any good-bye? What had happened, or was about to happen, that he should go away so mysteriously?

But, like all other minor matters in life, it was a day's wonder, and then sank and was forgotten, especially when the Sabbath was passed and Tuesday was at hand for the excursion. The region selected for the expedition lay a mile or two beyond Bull Cathcart's, where long ridges of chestnut woods covered a line of low hills, or skirted down their sides. Near the base of this range of hills, but half a mile back, was a ravine, one of the most romantic and picturesque places in the region, and not the less admired by many because its point of clear, cool water were filled with trout. So far from the opening of this ravine the dinner was to be eaten; and all the preparations and arrangements centered in and yet under charge of Hiram Sears, who also had a general oversight of all the "critters," as Deacon Hyerwood had the horses. Saturday, the evening day was in no respect ecclesiastical. It was not marked down in the calendar. So the was imputed for the neglect of it. Yet, with characteristic delicacy, it had for many years been a kind of parish re-union. The minister, the deacons, the trustees, the rich and the poor of the congregation were expected to turn out to enjoy their youth and gallantries; and even more than the Thanksgiving Day carried with it a sense of festivity.

Early on that morning there began to wind along the road families of young people and carriages of young men and maidens, a few on horseback, many in wagons which were clean for the occasion, but, by a little "sticking up," served to carry the load of provisions, baskets, and blankets and cooking apparatus. Farmer Calvert was the owner of wide-bodied team hitched at four horses, and was appointed to carry the heavy delicacies for the dinner. One after another of these teams was loaded by shouting, cheering groups—some with a hearty good morning, some with a few articulations to make haste, and one or two with specimens of beauty and wit, the more reliable of which were well seasoned and slightly salted.

Hiram Sears, of course, chose glorious with the spirit of black-faced Democracy. Hiram was a New York gentleman said that if he had been a Democrat he would have a thousand votes. Of course this thousand-dollar team was worthily employed in bringing Dr. Wentworth's family—a portion of them at any rate,—the doctor and his wife, Rose and Agnes Hathorne, while the rest she followed in another vehicle drawn by the doctor's own horses, under the direction of Peter Sewall, who on such occasions felt his true superiority over all the rest of mankind.

Dr. Basil rode in his favorite chaise, carrying Mrs. Basil and Mrs. Hathorne, who had not preached for him on Sunday, and with whom he had to make up all Sunday night discomforts, certain secondine points of theology on which they could neither see eye to eye nor harmonize in opinion.

Behind him came Deacon Trowbridge, to whom a good conscience and a good digestion, with a moderate fund given each admirable proficiency, had still given wonderful love for his years. He was not a wit him less pleased than her husband, could sit in one seat, or hear one earth any horse could draw him.

Hiram kept up a running fire as they severally arrived.

"Good morning, Doctor Basil! drive in here —that's a good blissful spot. Don't stop now. We'll take the dickey out of the thills, and see that he's fastened all right. You'd better go on and keep the deacons in order. There's a belle, when a horse or a deacon gits loose in a big pasture, what he'll do. I've known old horses

break their necks tryin' to race and jump as the young colts do."

Next came up Deacon Trowbridge.

"Bless me, deacon!—Good morning, marm!—if I'm not glad to see you! We've been waitin' for some slim fellow like you to climb the trees and shake off the chestnuts. The boys all look to you, deacon, for an example!"

The good-natured and fat deacon smiled, and even essayed a faint joke:

"Yes, Hiram, you'll see the nuts fly, if I only get up into them tree-tops!"

"Yes, yes; I'll bet on you and the squirrels!" said Hiram, who could spare but a word or two on each party, and already had turned to a new-comer, leaving Deacon Trowbridge standing with an answer in his mouth, in a waiting posture, as if he could not afford to lose a good thing.

And we think so too, and will present it for him. The deacon was waiting to say:

"If I get on a squirril, Hiram, he'll not be [illegible] much!"

There is [illegible] charm that goes with the supple gayeties of the [illegible] but another interest, scarcely less, though of a [illegible] kind, attends the occasional outbreak of youthful frolics among the old. Here were the yellow woods full of happy people; and, among them, many old men and women of stern morals and severe manner of life,—most of them stiffened with hard labor, and not more than once or twice in a year seeking pleasure or recreation for their own sakes. Many, many years it is since they sprang into the trees as do those nimble youngsters who are making the chestnuts rattle from the topmost boughs. But they remember their youthful feats, and boast them, and banter each other. Hiram seemed determined to have some of the old gentlemen up in the trees:

"I tell ye, Deacon Trowbridge, I think you're as smart yet as Deacon Marble is, though he takes on sech a nimble sort of steppin' 'round. It's my opinion that, at a fair climb, you'd beat him."

"Oh, Hiram, I'm too heavy—though I'm pretty spry yet. You see, brother Marble hasn't got so much to carry up with him!"

"No, nor so much strength to do it with."

"I tell ye what," said Deacon Marble, quite in the spirit of a boy, "I'll stump you, Trowbridge, to try it. I'll give you that big tree with low branches, and I'll take that slim one—and beat you."

They soon pulled off their coats and assailed their respective trees. Good Deacon Trowbridge, when his phlegmatic nature was thoroughly aroused, was a man of great strength. He took a hug at the tree such as a bear might have given; and, at first, it seemed as if he were going to succeed. But each hoist grew slower, and, though cheered by Hiram, it was doubtful if he could reach the limb just above his head. If each jerk upward had carried his body up as fast as it did the leg of his pantaloons, he would soon have mounted the coveted branch. At length he got hold of it, but no more could he do. It was too high for him to let go and jump, and as to getting any higher, it was out of the question. The poor man seemed in a woeful plight; but Hiram, equal to every emergency, had procured a rail, and, planting it under his foot, eased him down safely to the ground. Meanwhile, Deacon Marble, slim and nervous, had gone up his way like a squirrel. Already he was seeking out the topmost boughs, and rattling down the chestnuts in a perfect shower.

The shouts of merriment soon drew many to this rather unusual scene, and, among others, the deacons' wives. Mrs. Trowbridge gave way to unrestrained laughter. She was a natural laugher. She laughed with her mouth, her eyes, her whole face, with her voice and all her body. It was no silvery trickle, but a generous tide, that set in strongly, filled every indentation along the shore, and plashed up in spray all the more, if any obstacle sought to stay it.

"Well, Trowbridge,"—and then, like a child with the hooping-cough, she gave way to a paroxysm of laughter,—"I should as soon"—and again she was swept away from her remark, like one carried out from shore by a refluent wave,—"I should as soon expect"—the words were drowned in laugh—"to see" * * "to see * * "a but——" at which she fairly seemed to dissolve, and could no longer hold herself up, "——a butter-tub climb a tree!"

Far other were the emotions which filled the soul of Polly Marble when she beheld the scene. A fire blazed behind her spectacles. Though she was infirm in limb, the weakness had in no respect reached her head, every member of which was active. At first she seemed unable to utter her amazement. At length she gained relief:

"Deacon Marble, you'd better come down! An old man like you a courtin' death in the top of them trees ought to be ashamed of himself! It aint decent."

Then turning to those around her, she expressed herself thus:

"Wal, Hiram, I dew hope you're satisfied at last. You're always huntin' after mischief, and now you've got it. To think of't! One deacon a puffin' and red on the ground, and the other up in the tree top! No, it's no laughin' matter! It's a sin and a shame, and I'm surprised that anybody should laugh at such levity and folly," giving poor Mrs. Trowbridge a look of reproof that ought to have sobered her, but which in fact served to renew her agony of laughing, for she palpitated, and held on to her sides, and gasped: "Oh, I shall die—with—laughing—dew stop!"

Turning to her husband, Mrs. Marble began expostulating with him:

"Deacon Marble, if you have any respect for me, or for yourself—and I don't think you have a speck—you'll come down! Everybody's laughin' at you. You're a sight to behold. It's a wicked thing, and agin natur', for an old man like you to think he's a boy, and caper about in the trees. If the Lord had meant you to be a squirrel he'd a made you so!"

"Don't, Polly, don't. I'm comin' down. Just look here, I want to tell ye something!"

Incautious Polly! Will you never learn the deceitfulness of that husband of yours? She ventures under the tree to hear what he has to say, just as he gives a rousing shake to the branch on which he was lying. Down came the chestnuts, and down came the chestnut-burrs! They rattled on her bonnet, they pattered on her shoulders, and one burr—a frivolous burr, given to levity,—struck her new spectacles and knocked them quite out of symmetry!

The nimble deacon was soon on the ground, and would fain have left the impression on his spouse that it was merely the act of getting off the limb to come down that brought upon her the chestnuts. Hiram was in ecstacy.

"Isn't the deacon cute? Oh, what a politician he'd a made, if he'd only kept out of the church and away from religion!"

Other parties along the hills, widely separated, were busy with pranks and mirth. The young people climbed, the old and the very young picked up the brown nuts. The scene was charming. Dr. Wentworth and his family were as busy as any. It was Pete's office to shake the trees. The whole force of his peculiar genius now had full play. His skill in climbing was something worth looking at. His venturesomeness was equal to his skill and strength. It was no great feat to him, when trees interlocked, to swing from one to another,—to drop from a higher branch to a lower, never missing his hold. He cleared a tree of nuts in an incredibly short time, and the doctor's brown bags, replenished from Pete's labors, began to stand out with fatness.

Heywood had made himself agreeable to the various parties. His aunt had joined the Wentworths, and Rose seemed not displeased with the attentions which he paid her. In truth, there was something in Heywood's manner peculiarly winning. He was strong, frank, manly; but in everything an innate refinement manifested itself, and that unconscious self-possession and quietness which come from long familiarity with good society. Rose had seldom, if ever, met with one whose manners approached so near to a fine art, while his spirit was as artless, apparently, as a child's. That the charm had produced no effect I cannot honestly affirm. That it was more than an impression upon her imagination I do not believe. This certainly is much, and in perhaps a majority of cases it is final and effectual. But while Rose was pleased with Heywood, and found his presence more and more agreeable, she began to look more closely at her own feelings, at her relations and his to other people.

During the whole summer Rose had perceived a declension of attention in Barton Cathcart towards her, [illegible] in the proportion in which Heywood had grown more attentive. It seemed as if one were quietly withdrawing and giving place to the other.

There are many things which we do not value if only we can have them, but which we painfully miss if they are withheld. Every one has noticed how little effect praise produces on him, and yet how distinctly he feels the lack of it when it is not given. While Barton seemed at home with her, and the long acquaintanceship, and childhood associations clustered about their familiar intercourse, Rose did not fairly estimate the value at which she held Barton. But when he seemed to fall off, when in his stead another, of a wholly different and contrasted nature came in his place, Rose was conscious, not of positive pain, or even regret, but of uneasiness and of a questioning within herself.

Heywood she believed to be true and right-minded. She thought that his nature was transparent. He was one who could never appear in any society without drawing to him all eyes, and could never be known without drawing to him as well the confidence of all. And yet there was no sense of reserved power with him. His whole nature lay apparent. There were no depths out of which might rise unexpected disclosures. He was fine-natured, handsome, accomplished, brilliant in society, and true-hearted. These qualities could not fail to touch any one's fancy. But in all their intercourse he had never introduced any subject deeper than is sounded by common experience. While both of these friends were near her, each yielding the fruit of his own nature, the contrast was not so much displayed. Rose had felt a vague uneasiness through the summer, that Barton, though seeming the same in manner as ever, had less and less frequented her father's house. During his vacation he had but once visited them; and now, suddenly, without any leave-taking, he had gone away, to be absent for months. Rose was surprised and piqued by this seeming want of care for her, who had been his friend from childhood. It did not seem as if there could ever be a pause in their friendship any more than between herself and her father or mother. She could scarcely mark the degrees through which, in some measure, she and Barton had let go of each other; but it was clear to her that they were receding. With distance came perspective. More than ever now she valued that depth of nature in Barton, out of which endless mysteries came. She could never divine from the themes of to-day what would be the range of thought on which his mind would travel when next they met. There was a strong aspiration in him, an indefinable yearning, which wrought in him on the one side self-distrust and humility, and on the other exceeding boldness, and changeful activity. Her father was fruitful of thought, but restful. Barton was restless—a voyager along new seas and strange continents. Now that he was parted from her—so abruptly that it seemed as if he was broken off—she became conscious of the force and depth of his character. If there was an uncertain unrestfulness in it, it was perhaps but the fermentation which, when completed, would sink the lees to the bottom and leave the generous wine clear and strong.

It ought not to be thought that these analyses were made by Rose. They are but the philosophical deduction and solution of certain impressions and convictions in her mind. And it was necessary to draw them out with some distinctness, in order to account for her present course. For, by one of those fortunate accidents which seem to attend pic-nics, in the woods, Heywood and Rose had wandered off from the family. Either chestnuts lay thicker toward a little brook, which gurgled and twined through a dell, and was proud of the yellow leaves which it whirled in mimic rafts down its pretty cascades, or collected in some eddying pool, or else they were attracted by the mossy beauty of a beech-tree, whose roots had been partially undermined, but whose undiminished green yet braved the frosts. There sat Rose, and Heywood in his very soul believed that so lovely a creature there was not in all the world besides. Could he bear her in triumph home to his friends he could ask no other surety of happiness for life, and no other pledge of his victory over Virginia prejudice!

Why did Rose suffer these illusions which in her secret soul she knew could not be realized? Tell me, ye who have suffered the enchantment of the midsummer night's dreams and fancies! Tell me, ye who remember how the charmed imagination hushes every caution, sees all events in heightened colors, and bears one as in a delicious dream, over paths and through experiences, which, though distinct, seem unreal, magical, enchanting!

Have you never seen a child's bubble blown till its glowing sides are pictured in exquisite tints, and then thrown off into the air, rising or settling down, with motion so gentle that it seems more like a thought than a thing? Untouched, it holds on, a brilliant globe, on whose sides earthly objects, purified and refined, are reflected, as if they were heavenly pictures—revelations of scenes unapproachable. But, once seek to possess it, lay but your lightest finger upon it, and the arch and orb collapse, and the brilliant picture disappears!

The horn sounded for the dinner. Calls were heard for one and another, and for Rose. Soon she was seen slowly coming up the dell. Her eyes showed that she had been weeping. Heywood was with her, as one who is absent. Something between sadness and sternness was in his face. I know not what had passed; nor how Rose excused herself for permitting what she had always before forestalled and prevented. Perhaps she did not excuse herself. Perhaps her sense of regret at Barton's neglect and unceremonious leaving had carried her farther than she knew, and she awoke with a strong rebound into her full former self. I only know that she seemed more pained and regretful than she had ever been seen before. But even greater pangs were just before her.

The stream near whose border Rose had been sitting came down, not far above them, from a ravine of singular beauty. At the point where the water fairly escaped from its entanglement, the rocks came so near together as to form a kind of door, not more than twenty feet wide, but its sides were steep, and rose to a considerable height, and then sloping off backward, were covered with shrubs and finally with trees. Once within that door a charming space opened, between one and two hundred feet in diameter, and shut in by walls to a great height. At the farther side, as you entered, the stream, descending in a fall about thirty feet in height, fell into a deep pool. It then stole away close by the rocks, leaving a level space on the other side large enough for a party of several hundred. Before it made its plunge, the waters far up might be seen rushing down an incline on the shelving rocks at an angle of forty-five degrees. On either side of this chamber the rocks were stratified, and shrubs and plants grew in their seams. The more adventurous among the young men, by dextrous use of their toes in these rifts, and by grasping firmly the roots or stems with their hands, climbed up the steep face of the rocks, and ascending above the cascade, followed up the ravine to new falls and romantic passages. Already a dozen, against the protestation of the ladies, had scattered themselves along the precipitous cliffs. Heywood, who sat buried in thought, seemed suddenly to awake, and began climbing the dangerous way. No one could be more adroit; yet even he could not afford to go along that perilous way with wandering thoughts. Suddenly there arose a wild outcry. Those below looked up to see the splash of water along the inclined way above the fall, and quicker than thought, shot out over the fall, Heywood was seen descending toward the pool beneath! Within that day many rocks broken off by frosts and hidden by the water, and no more dangerous place for a plunge could well be found.

Into the boiling pool he dropped and disappeared. In a moment—it seemed to Rose an age—a dark form emerged along the edge of the pool. Instantly, in the alarm, there was a rush from every direction. But Pete, who was half way up the cliff, seemed fairly to glide down the side of the rock, so nimbly did he descend; and first of all he was by Heywood's side, and lifted him from the water, and laid him upon the mossy meadow just beyond.

Dr. Wentworth was sent for, and soon arrived. Heywood lay like one dead. The wet hair fell back from his white temples. Rose chafed his hands, and gazed upon him with an expression of indescribable anguish. With a faint cry, as Pete laid Heywood upon the moss, Alice Cathcart fell into her father's arms fainting. But already Heywood began to revive. He had been stunned by the fall. Arrangements were speedily made to convey him to 'Biah Cathcart's, the nearest point at which he could receive needed attention, and where Dr. Wentworth could make a more critical examination of his hurts.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

THE COST OF A FLIRTATION.

BY CAROLINE CONRAD.

Jessie Derne stood by the fountain midway of the garden, dipping her rosy finger-tips in the crystal wave, and furtively watching her lover who stood opposite, his eyes gloomily averted from her.

She looked like the nymph of the fountain, with her clear eyes, her delicately cut features, and her willowy, drooping figure.

Presently she stole round to his side and laid a little pleading hand on his arm, saying:

"Wynne!"

He glanced down at her after a moment.

"Well!"

Jessie fidgetted a little under that stern eye; but she was a good girl in the main, and she said, looking down:

"I—I'm sorry."

"Humph!"

Jessie could be as wilful as any little spoiled beauty when she chose; but not choosing just now, or not wise enough to see that it wouldn't answer, or else, like the good little girl she was sometimes, conscious how much she was in the wrong, she began to sob hysterically at Wynne's obdurate mood.

Poor Wynne was too soft-hearted to endure that, and forgot all his jealous pain of the evening before, and the grave remonstrances he had meant to utter at the sight of Jessie's brown orbs swimming in tears.

"Never mind, my darling," he said, drawing her to him and kissing the little, quivering face; "I was jealous, that is all, lest this handsome Rupert's black eyes should steal your love from me."

"Nobody's eyes could do that, Wynne, and you know it. I'm a vain, naughty girl, and I liked to dance with Rupert Kennedy because I knew the girls were all dying to be in my place; but I think you're ten millions handsomer than he is, you know I do, and I couldn't love anybody else but you if I tried ever and ever so hard."

The last words were uttered in a most delicious whisper, with a soft hand stealing up to his face.

Sweet, sweet flatterer.

They were still standing there by the murmurous fountain, when a shadow fell across the marble basin, and they looked up to see Rupert Kennedy standing there, grim and ghastly pale. He was shaking with passion, and his voice was hoarse and unsteady, as he said:

"I have heard every word, and tried to wait till you were alone, Jessie Derne; for I would not needlessly humiliate myself before the man I hate; but I should have suffocated with rage if I had waited longer, or gone away without telling you——"

He was forced to stop to take breath. The words seemed to choke him.

Wynne Leyden put a remonstrating hand upon him gently, for he saw that the man was not himself; but Kennedy shook him off almost savagely.

"Did you think, Jessie Derne," he said, bitterly, "that I was like the rest of the poor moths who get their wings singed dancing attendance on your capricious steps? If you do not find this last flirtation of yours a desperate business, I am mistaken. If I live long enough, I will give you reason to repent it to the last moment of your life."

He turned and strode away among the bushes, and the two beside the fountain looked after him with dim foreboding in their hearts.

Jessie had done nothing but shiver and cling to her lover while he stood there, and now she buried her face in his arms, crying, affrightedly:

"Oh, Wynne, do you think he will?"

"Will what, my darling?" Wynne said, soothingly.

Jessie shuddered and moaned.

"If he should hurt you, Wynne!"

"There is no danger, little one, not the least," he answered, drawing her toward the house. "He will be ashamed to-morrow of what he has said to-night."

"Do you think he will? Oh, Wynne, I mean to try and be a better girl than I have been," she sobbed, pitifully, and reluctant to let him go because of that vague fear which had taken root in her heart.

That little episode had one good result at least. Wynne took advantage of the strangely-yielding mood that had come upon his procrastinating little sweetheart, and persuaded her to "name the day" so long provokingly delayed by her caprice, when she would become his own for good.

Rupert Kennedy vanished from that part of the country about this time, and Jessie sobered into a steady enough little wife to satisfy anybody a great deal more exacting than Wynne Leyden.

"Half-past one," murmured Wynne Leyden, glancing at his watch one afternoon, when he had been two years married; "I believe I'll go and get Jessie and take her to see those paintings she was raving about last night. I don't believe I'm needed here."

He looked meditatively over his shoulder at the busy salesroom of the firm in which he was junior partner, and concluded, in view of the surprise it would be to Jessie, that he would go at any rate.

"Hallo!" he exclaimed, as he nearly stumbled over a man who was hurrying by at the corner.

The man recovered himself quickly and passed on, but Wynne stood staring after him a moment.

"I could have sworn that was Kennedy," he said, resuming his way.

The little cozy sitting-room where Jessie usually sat in the afternoons wore its accustomed cool bright look, as he turned from the warm, dusty street into it, but Jessie herself lay in a white swoon upon the ruddy carpet. Wynne thought she was dead at first, but she opened her eyes as he lifted her, and shut them again with a moan and a shudder.

"Has he gone—oh, Wynne, has he gone?" she cried, clinging to her husband and sobbing on his shoulder.

"Has who gone, love?" Wynne asked, tenderly; "there is no one here but you and me."

"Will you get a carriage—dear, dear husband, will you take me to my baby this moment?—my precious darling that I ought never to have let go from me a single hour."

"Anything you wish, Jessie, child; but tell me first, what made you faint?"

"I saw Rupert Kennedy. He was there at the window, and stood and looked at me through the vines with his great evil eyes, and his white face like a ghost."

Wynne laughed.

"Is that all, pet?"

"Ah, no, no, no!" she cried, starting up, white and trembling. "Take me to my baby, Wynne, if I have one still, for the eyes of that cruel man said as plainly as they could say it, that he had got his revenge, that he said he would have, you know. I thought he meant you, when I fainted; now I know, I know it must be my baby. Take me to her, if you love me."

It was in vain that Wynne attempted to pacify his wife; she insisted in a kind of frantic agony upon being taken at once to her baby, which had been sent into the country a few weeks before, in charge of a nurse in whom Jessie had the utmost confidence. He yielded at last, and ordered a carriage. Jessie sat in it like one stupefied with terror during the entire drive. But when they stopped at the gate of the cottage in which she had left the baby Rose, she fainted again, and Wynne had to carry her into the house in his arms.

"Send Mary here at once, please," Wynne Leyden said, as he bore the unconscious form of his wife across the threshold of the cottage sitting-room, and laying her upon a lounge, began to chafe the still hands in his.

"Mary, sir?" exclaimed the woman addressed; "why, she went back to the city three days ago."

Wynne stared at her.

"Where is the child then?"

"Why where should it be but with its nurse?"

"Do you mean to tell me," he demanded, sternly, "that Mary went away from here three days ago, taking my child with her, and has not been heard from since?"

"That's about it. We haint heard of her leastways."

"My God! Jessie was right then. Was there any one here to see Mary—any strange gentleman?"

"No, sir, not as I seen," the woman said, bending her woman's skill to the restoration of the unconscious Jessie.

Wynne was leaving the room to collect his bewildered thoughts, for he felt that he could not at that moment meet the wild questioning eyes of the unhappy mother, when Jessie suddenly called to him.

One glance in his face was all that was needed to confirm her worst fears, and she cowered back again upon the lounge helpless with terror.

"My darling, we shall find her again," Wynne said, tenderly. "I will return to the city at once, and put the police upon her track before morning."

"I must go with you," Jessie said, rousing and standing up eager to be off, though she trembled so she had almost to be carried to the carriage.

She was reclining the following morning in her own room, waiting with feverish anxiety the return of her husband, who had gone out upon some rumor which they both fancied might concern their lost darling, when a hurried tap came at her door, and Mary rushed in.

"Sure, ma'am, an' you'll forgive me this time. I'll never do the likes again."

Poor Jessie did not hear her. She heard nothing but a little wailing cry from Mary's arms, and caught the baby from her with a hysterical sob.

"It's all come of me brother, ma'am. It was all along of their takin' him up, an' I had to go an' pay his fine for him," Mary went on; but Jessie, uncovering the face of her recovered treasure, stopped amid her breathless kisses of the rosebud lips to ask, with a wild look at the woman:

"Is this my very own baby, Mary? You wouldn't have the heart to—to—oh, Mary!"

For Mary shrank from her mistress's wild eyes, and grew red and white alternately, like a guilty creature.

"What do you mean?" Jessie cried, clutching her by the arm. "What have you done with my little Rose? this is not she."

She made a gesture as though she would throw the child from her, and then stared in a kind of fascination at the once bright face.

"Indeed it is, ma'am. The blessed Virgin knows it's your own and nobody's besides. Don't the heart of yees own it, ma'am?" Mary exclaimed, falling upon her knees. "Sure an' I wouldn't be afther defraudin' a mother of her own baby for any man's money."

"Oh, Mary! my darling was delicate and puny; this child is rosy and strong."

"An' wouldn't the country air make her so?" Mary persisted, volubly; but there was still a something in her manner that kept alive in the poor mother's heart that horrible fear.

Wynne came home presently, and put the girl through a sharp course of questioning, but failed to elicit anything new. She persisted in her story. Her brother had been arrested, and she had come up to the city on his account and brought the child with her. That was all she could, or, at least, would tell, and she made oaths enough to that; but there was still that inexplicable something hanging about her that made sober, practical Wynne uneasy in spite of all he could do. Mary acted guilty and frightened. Besides, no amount of investigation could discover the whereabouts of that brother she told of. Threats and bribes alternately were in vain resorted to, to elicit anything more or different; and Mary was at last sent away in disgrace, though she had lived with them ever since their marriage in some capacity, and had always seemed more than usually faithful and honest.

Wynne Leyden prospered in the world. He grew wealthy year by year; but he would any day have given every grain of the yellow dust that was his to know beyond a doubt that the fair and delicate blossom growing up in his home was his child, and not that of a stranger.

They had long since removed to another residence, that was palatial indeed, beside that in which their little Rose had been born. Jessie Leyden was surrounded with every luxury; but she would willingly, eagerly have quitted her brown stone palace and dwelt in a hut supping upon crusts, to have had forever stilled that questioning pang that darted like a burning arrow through her heart, ever and anon, when she looked in the loving, soft eyes of her child.

Rose Leyden grew up delicate and fairy like as a mist of the morning. Daybreak itself had not such roseate flushes as her cheeks, nor the skies such deeply azure mysteries as her gold-fringed eyes. But about her also hung that shadow, vague and impalpable as a cloud at noonday.

The love between the three was *utter* nevertheless, sharpened by this remotely hovering agony. This lovely, slender girl was literally knit into the very chords of Jessie Leyden's heart. If that horrible doubt had never entered there, she could never have loved the child with a wilder intensity than she did; and the one unutterable terror of her life was, lest some day that man, Rupert Kennedy, should start up suddenly before her and claim her child.

They had sought him far and wide, but they had not found him.

"Sweet lady, for the love of Heaven!"

Rose Leyden, tripping along one of the fashionable thoroughfares, turned her auroral face toward the tattered and decrepit looking heap crouched upon the curb-stone, and extending a shaking hand for charity. Opening a dainty little purse she dropped some coins into the old woman's palm, smiling sweetly at her voluble thanks, and passing lightly on. A misty thing of thread and lace fluttered back as she turned away, and dropped upon the old woman's lap. Rose's name was embroidered snowily among the delicate meshes, and the crone bent to read it. The next moment she rose up gaunt and tall, looking after the young girl with a smothered cry, and hurtling in pursuit with a swiftness one would have scarcely expected from her apparent decrepitude. Down one avenue and up another, keeping Rose always in view, hiding among the shrubbery in the park when she entered there, and watching her with hungry eyes, mumbling and muttering to herself, and mopping her old eyes with the little handkerchief as Rose came hurriedly out of the park, her sweet face white with terror, and her soft eyes starting.

"Mamma!"

Jessie Leyden had had a happy morning. Of late peace had nestled more and more in her breast, and she looked into the clear and loving eyes of her child, and she was thinking sweet and pleasant thoughts of her when that sharply agonized cry broke upon her ear.

She knew what it meant, as though a thunderbolt had smitten her, even before she turned and caught the half fainting girl in her arms, and saw in the doorway the dark, sneering face of Rupert Kennedy.

"Oh mamma, mamma, he says he's my father, and that he will take me away from you; that I'm not your little Rose at all! Oh, mamma, he scares me; send him away!"

The poor mother's lips were like snow, and her eyes dusky with anguish as she held the slender, frightened creature in a frantic embrace, and looked mute questioning at the cruel man who stood there.

"It is true," he said, the words distilling like slow venom through his sneering lips. "I paid the woman, Mary Murdoch, to change the children in their cradles. It is my flesh you have cherished so daintily; yours wanders, a barefooted vagrant, along the vilest alleys of New York wickedness and degradation."

Mrs. Leyden looked at him with horror cleaving her soul like a two-edged sword. She had never in the moments of her awfullest foreboding conceived malice so vicious as this. Her lips moved mechanically.

"You will have to prove this strange tale true," she said; "there is a voice within me that proclaims it false. Nature tells me it is no blood of yours that has crimsoned the loving lips I have kissed so many, many times."

"Indeed an' you're tellin' the blessed truth, ma'am—shure an' you are."

The old woman darted past Kennedy into the room. He gave her a withering glance, but far from seeming annihilated by it she towered in her rags taller and more gaunt than ever.

"Yees paid me for doin' yer work," she said, with a sly leer, "but the misthress here will pay me more for undoin' it. Didn't I folly ye, ye murtherin' villain, the hull of three days till I got my nurseling into my arms again? Oh, I *did that*—and I changed the babies agin, an' it's your own black bantling is doin' the barefoot business, ye'll find, me boy."

She snapped her fingers in his face, and literally drove him out of the house before her brandished fists.

He never came back again.

Poor Mary Murdoch! She had gone down in the world; but what could be done for her the Leydens did, you may be sure; and that poor lost child of Rupert Kennedy's Mrs. Leyden and Rose sought till they found, and rescued from the awful ways among which she had fallen.

THE SOCIETY OF WOMAN.

No society is more profitable, because none more refining and provocative of virtue, than that of refined and sensible women. God enshrined peculiar goodness in the form of woman, that her beauty might win, her gentle voice invite, and the desire of her favor persuade men's sterner souls to leave the paths of sinful strife for the ways of pleasantness and peace. But when woman falls from her blest eminence, and sinks the guardian and the cherisher of pure and rational enjoyments into the vain coquette, and flattered idolator of idle fashion, she is unworthy of an honorable man's love, or a sensible man's admiration. Beauty is then but, at best,

"——A pretty plaything,
Dear deceit."

To be our companions, women should be fitted to be our friends; to rule our hearts, they should be deserving the approbation of our minds. There are many such, and that there are not more is rather the fault of our sex than their own; and despite all the unmanly scandals that have been thrown upon them in prose or verse, they would rather share in the rational conversation of men of sense than listen to the silly compliments of fools; and a man dishonors them, as well as disgraces himself, when he seeks their circle for idle pastime, and not for the improvement of his mind and the elevation of his heart.

Comfort of Children.

Call not that man wretched who, whatever else he suffers as to pain inflicted, pleasure denied, has a child for whom he hopes and on whom he doats. Poverty may grind him to the dust, obscurity may cast its darkest mantle over him, the song of the gay may be far from his dwelling, his face may be unknown to his neighbors, and his voice may be unheeded by those among whom he dwells—even pain may rack his joints, and sleep may flee from his pillow, but he has a gem, with which he would not part for wealth defying computation, for fame filling a world's ear, for the luxury of the highest health, or for the sweetest sleep that ever sat upon a mortal's eye.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

AFTER THE STORM.

BY GEORGE W. DUNDAY.

There are no trees on the sky,
Where robin in climbs the thunder-car;
The arrows which the storm spent by
Are quenched in rainbows sacred star.

Lo! earth and heaven are now serene,
For when away the tempest flew
The earth put on a gayer green,
And heaven a clearer blue of brighter hue.

Now climbs at crimson edged with gold
Adam the evening walk on high,
And mother eyes at eve unfold
The rich gallantry of the sky.

Eternal arch of bumbless blue,
Ethereal floor of crystal sea,
With angels there shining through
As shine the silent stars at night.

Above its quenchless beacon fires,
The city of our God beholds,
The shadow of its golden spires,
Its crystal gates and streets of gold.

The overarching skies unite
Both worlds, and make a radiant road
Paved with suns, moons, and stars, to light
The pilgrim on his path to God.

After the storm the skies are clear,
And each unlimited star we mark
Seems like a happy, trembling tear,
On a serene child's eye at dark.

If the dull exiles fell from our eyes,
While gazing at the heavens above,
Could we see worlds beyond the skies,
And those who hated here from afar!

AT THE SEA-SHORE.

BY AMY RANDOLPH.

There was a sort of murmuring "sensation" on the wide, thronged piazza of the fashionable sea-side hotel that summer afternoon as Miss Trevor came in her trailing dress of white organdie, the loose white scarf fluttering from her shoulder, and, with a grace, lowering like the white puff of vapor just on the edge of her little Spanish hat.

Julia Trevor liked to go through the world in that way. Even as a child, people say, she had always been accustomed to make a sensation wherever she went, and to have her low mirror atmosphere; attention and admiration were as essential to her as the air she breathed.

Julia Trevor was as nearly spoiled as a woman can be by the possession of her natural beauty, and she knew it.

Julia'll be all right when once she settles down," said the matron, with the wrinkled face to him, in conjugal confidence, their pretty daughter's future husband.

"Yes" said the mother, half sighing, half smiling, "she has had her such a long time to settle down."

Mrs. Trevor was right.

Julia was tall and magnificently moulded, with superb shoulders and arms, and a skin glow with golden lights and shadows, hazel eyes, and a profile as faultless as that of the Venus de Milo, while her mouth, rosily lovely in its scarlet curves, could express every shade of mirthful sympathy or the haughtiest scorn—scorn which seemed to wither into dust all human fame.

As she swept down the beach path, with her white drapery trailing behind her, and her small parasol rose, fragrant and perfectly shaped, hanging from the slender coils of hair, Alice Meredith rose up and joined her.

"What a magnificent morning for a sail, Miss Trevor?"

"Is it?"

Julia was not inclined to be communicative. Mr. Meredith colored slightly, and then went on:

"The sea dull is lying as the little pier with her wings all outspread ready for a flight,—will you honor her with your company this magnificent this morning?"

"Thank you, I don't care to sail."

Alice's brave dignity collapsed; he bit his lip.

"Will you excuse me, then, please explain yourself?"

"Mr. Meredith, I am not aware that my speech stands in need of any interpretation."

"I beg your pardon, I misread your manner—your tone."

"I am not bound to render an account of my tone or manner to you or any other gentlemen, Mr. Meredith."

Alice bowed his head haughtily.

"I stand rebuked, Miss Trevor. Hereafter I shall not trouble you again. Good morning."

She held out her hand, half in a pale, appealing sort of way, but he did not see it, and, with a ludicrous vehemence,

"It hits to be a final parting, Miss Trevor?"

"I suppose so, as I am not going to Europe."

"Would you rather I should remain here?"

Julia raised her eyebrows with the beautiful hauteur which had driven more than one lover to cannot but admire its cool, audacious grace.

"Would I desire? Really I have not taken the trouble to form any opinion on the subject."

"Then it is a final good-by?"

He bowed again over her hand and was gone before she could see the shade of her scornful words upon his dark Castilian face.

Julia looked after him with her curved pout of her parasol through the sliver softness of the gleaming sunset, mechanically picking up tiny shells and pearl-white stones polished to dazzling whiteness by the action of continuous tide; but she was thinking of Mr. Meredith all the while.

"They say there is the blood of Spanish princes in his veins, and it seemed to betray itself in a curious, aroused dispute in her cheek. "I think, had his letter or correspondent with the impudence his mistress ago, he would cheerfully have undertaken a challenge, a duel, or given me over to the rocks and disasters even of the fatal dangerous sail. Julia Trevor's pretty, well-boasted himself pride against the power of wounded vanity, and she remembered at last. On board the yacht were a number of gentlemen and a few precious inheritances. I am thankful that I was born human!"

So might fair Cleopatra have exulted on the ready slaves of her power, as might Helen of Troy have smiled on the ruin she had wrought!

And when she returned to her room she was so radiant that Mrs. Trevor looked up from her silk and her sweet to question:

"Why, Julia, what has brightened you up so?"

"Nothing, mamma! I am tired, though. I think I'll lie down and sleep awhile."

It was late in the afternoon when Miss Trevor again came out, with her lace parasol and fluttering barège scarf, and strolled slowly down along the beachpath.

"Julia, where are you going? Can I go too?"

"Yes—come. I am only going to take a little walk along the shore to watch the tides sweep out."

Bessie Payne came rushing up like a child. She was a tall, although eighteen blooming summers had set their sunshine in her brown locks, their starlight in the blue depths of her soft, innocent eyes. Bessie was like a kitten, or a white rabbit, or a dove, or any other soft, winning little thing whom you pet and care for almost unconsciously. Julia Trevor was not one whose affections went out very readily, yet even she was fond of Bessie Payne.

"Oh, Julia, did you see Mr. Meredith and Colonel Tracy go out in the yacht two hours ago?"

"No."

"How splendidly the little "Sea Gull" spread her white wings to the breeze! I wish I had been asked me to go along too?"

"We shall not be quite sure as well, Bessie."

"Do you think so? But I would see that—"

"Then, Bessie, you shall have your wish," which is quite as good, as I see there are two little boats fastened to the shore, with oars in them, and I don't mind to be a sailor, and I don't think I have forgotten all my skill yet."

She stooped and unloosed the rope moorings.

"Jump in!"

"Shall you get afraid, Julia?"

Julia's low, silvery laughter scornfully.

"It just an hour I'll bring you back, my little Bessie. There—just lay up amidst of the seat—that's right. Now we are off!"

Like a sea-bird the little boat glided away over the clear tides, propelled by the swift, regular strokes of Miss Trevor's oars, which she sat, holding on to the seat, her cherry lips apart and her blue eyes dilated, half with delight, half with terror.

"Julia you like it, little one?"

"Oh, I like it so much! How glorious the waters lie! and to look at the sunset on the water, like a great line of gold; and those purple-edged clouds—they look like the heaven—it is like a picture, Julia."

It was like a picture; nor were the two fair girls in the tiny row-boat the least beautiful features of it. Julia, still with half loosened hair, Julia's hair and grace now bloom to her cheeks, while her eyes grew darker than ever, and the unconsciously graceful pose of her long throat and slender shoulders would have been the artistic ecstasy of a sculptor.

So the little boat shot merrily onward, the rush of the tide and the measured dip of the oars accompanying the low, musical voices, and all the edges of the purple clouds glowed with gold colors, and the blue waters flashed and rippled as they sang their tiny music.

"Julia, you are not to talk," pleaded the innocent, clinging voice beside her.

"I will be very silent, little one."

"Shall I row you afraid, Julia?"

Julia's low, silvery laughter scornfully.

"It just an hour I'll bring you back, my little Bessie. There—just lay up amidst of the seat—that's right. Now we are off!"

Like a sea-bird the little boat glided away over the clear tides, propelled by the swift, regular strokes of Miss Trevor's oars, which she sat, holding on to the seat, her cherry lips apart and her blue eyes dilated, half with delight, half with terror.

"Julia,

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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TERMS, ETC.

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RECOLLECTIONS OF A BUSY LIFE.

By HORACE GREELEY.

No. V.

MY EARLY SCHOOL-DAYS.

My mother, having lost her mother when but five years old, was, for the next few years, the especial protégé and favorite of her aged grandmother, already mentioned, who had emigrated from Ireland when but fourteen years old, and whose store of Scottish and Scotch-Irish traditions, songs, anecdotes, shreds of history, &c., can but rarely have been equalled. These she imparted freely to her eager, receptive pupil and daughter, who was a glad, easy learner, whose schooling was better than that of most farmers' daughters in her day, and who naturally became a most omnivorous and retentive reader. There were many brothers, but the intimacy was slight; they were more accurate and more profound than hers; but few can have been better versed in literature or so stimulative the unfolding mind in its earliest stages of development.

I was for years a feeble, delicate child, often under medical treatment, and unable to watch, through a closed window, the sailing of the clouds without entertaining an instant and violent attack of illness. Having suddenly lost two former children, and being the only one of my mother's left to regard me even more fondly and tenderly and tradition. I was specially clever in spelling—one at in which there were then few even tolerably proficient—so that I soon rose to the head of the "first class," and usually retained that position. It was a custom of the school to "choose sides" for a spelling-match or counter-match once each week—the head of the first class to spelling, and the pupil standing next, being the second choice. In my day, however, it was not necessary to change the rule, and confine the choice to those who stood second and third respectively—as I—a mere infant of four years—could spell, but not choose—often preferring my playmates who could spell better than I.

These spelling-matches usually took place in the evening, when I could not keep my eyes open to participate in the fun. It was often necessary to rap me sharply when "the word" was given out to me; but I never was not ready to spond, and it came to be said that I spelled as well asleep as awake. I apprehend that this was more likely to be true of some others of the class; who, if ever so sound asleep, could scarcely have been more than half awake.

We very generally complain of frequent changes in our school-books, and with reason. Yet we ought to consider that these frequent changes have resulted in signal improvement; that a book issued to-day are not one-half so better than those of fifty years ago, but that their improvement has not been fully paralleled by our progress. When I first went to Master's Spelling-Book was just supplanting Dilworth's "New American Preceptor," and succeeding unto "The Art of Reading," and the only Grammar in use was "Dr. Ladley Anderson's," by Caleb Bingham—a poor as well as bad one, and would ridicule. Geography was scarcely studied at all; Chemistry, Geology, and other departments of Natural Science, had never been heard of in rural school-houses. "Morse's Geography," which soon came in vogue, was a miserable compend of political and statistical information, and, indeed, barely one map, without any pretense of a school Geography now. Very soon, Lindley Murray's Grammar and English Reader came into fashion—but only partially; for not yet well adapted to the comprehension of children of the fourteen years. In fact, I trusted considerable time on Grammar to little purpose, and made no very decided progress, till I had learned to scan my authorities critically and repudiate their errors. When I had pondered myself into a decided conviction that Murray was not fully understand his subject, and that his defining "Lord" as an example of the first, and "Lady" as that of the second, was the third-person singular of the imperative mood, were among blunders, which a real knowledge of grammar would have taught me to avoid, I had broken loose from the shackles of authority and

[WRITTEN EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER.]

than she otherwise might have done; hence, I was her companion and confidant about as early as I could listen to the abundant store of ballads, stories, anecdotes and traditions [illegible] She [illegible] was [illegible] read at her knee—of course, poorly—but can not remember—but I can clearly recollect her sitting spinning at her "little wheel" on the floor, and my sitting or lying near by, hearing my daily lesson; and thus I soon acquired the facility of reading from a book whatever it spoke down as readily as in the usual fashion—a knack which I did not suppose peculiar, but which, had it been observed, became a subject of neighborhood wonder and laudatory exaggeration.

Two months before I had attained the age of three years, I was taken home by my grandfather Woodburn to spend a few weeks with him, and sent to school from that time. The school-house of its district being but fifty rods from his door, whereas our proper school-house in Amherst was two miles, and the nearest school-house (in Berlin) over a mile from my father's, [illegible] I used at my grandfather's and went thence to school most of each winter and some months in summer during the next three years.

My first schoolmaster was David Woodbury Dickey, a nephew of my grandfather, a college graduate, and an able, worthy man, though rather a severe than a successful governor of youth. The district was large; three or four [illegible] names on its roll of pupils—many of them of full-grown men and women, and well advanced in studies—and probably with an average attendance of perhaps sixty. All to be instructed in the studies, as well as ruled, by a single teacher, who did his work with a thoroughness which the application of birch and ferule. He was a strict, and I suppose a just, though not a very critical, and unquestioned moral sway in his little spirit and the majority of the district, to retain the mastership in winter was Cyrus Wing.

Our term in October, and immediately after from Massachusetts—men, who rarely or never stuck to a job long enough to work from end to end of a row, but governed by whim and caprice of his pupils. They grain in the better language of the day—that there were no better, when he took charge of them—in fact, they his predecessor's best. He was a man who was mainly the same—yet not the same—each succeeding year, and the worlds against it much [illegible] and, when he left us, at the close of the second term, a general acknowledgment of parents on the last afternoon, with a rural feast for the elder and delightful, should be the emphatic appreciation of his worth. For my own part, I could enjoy nothing, perhaps, and my mother and home was my grief at parting with him. It was the first deep sorrow of my life. I never saw him again, but learned that he was drowned the next winter.

There was an unruly frolicsome custom of "hazing" on the first day of winter-terms in country schools, which I trust never obtained a wider recognition. On the first of January, and for days on some other day than the big boys chose to comfort or make a holiday, they usually passed off quietly as on any other day; but the moment the master left the house in quest of his dinner, the rude ones were started homeward, the door and windows suddenly and entirely barricaded, and the older pupils, thus fortified against intrusion, proceeded to spend the noon in play and hilarity. I have known numbers to make a desperate struggle for admission, but I do not recollect that one ever succeeded—the odds being too great. If he appeared to the neighboring fathers, they were apt to recollect that they had some logs themselves, and could hire to dislodge and let matters take their course. I recollect one instance, however, in which a boy who could not who thought he ought to have been remembered with the sheet, and resolved to resort to violence. Procuring a piece of board, he mounted from a fence to the roof of the school-house, and covered the top of the chimney nicely with his board. Ten minutes thereafter, the house was filled with smoke, and its inmates, opening the door and windows, were glad to make terms with the outsider.

The capital start given me by my mother enabled me to make rapid progress in school-studies, progress monstrously exaggerated by gossip and Hereafter, and was prepared to accept at the light, [illegible] Daniel Adams (a New Hampshire man, now lately deceased) had just opened his school in Amherst [illegible] [illegible] I had not reached my fifth year when I entered it, and I remained for two years. I cannot say what progress has very exactly been made, but I remember that thirty or forty years since, shortened the time and increased the interest of a recent lecture on English Grammar by at least one-half. I believe I remember that I was then the only pupil who recalls in other departments of science.

I can still repeat the whole of "The Columbian Orator," given me by my uncle Perry, [illegible] my father's absence. He was also very sick of the measles at my grandfather's, when my mother died, and I was left with him to have been familiar, in its day, with that collection of [illegible] It is [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] from orations, from sermons, from speeches in Parliament, and from essays, &c., &c., and five or three versified themes for declamation, such as "Hohenlinden," "Marco Bozzaris," and all the lines (since attributed to Edward Everett, but who wrote them at all) beginning with "Lo! where the rosy bowers of India," &c., &c., and ending, "Yes! O scarce expect one of my sex to succeed in this way." Those lines which I was dragged forward to recite incessantly till I could repeat them without a mistake, I still find a pleasant book for years, and I became thoroughly insinuated into the spirit of the book, and could almost have learned much of value from it—certainly not much harm. The first of these pieces I learned consecutively was the Ruins, under the guidance of my father, who had read them to me often.

I attended school rather irregularly, during the first four years of my life, and always in the western district of Bedford, about a mile from my father's. The school-house was then a [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

EVENING-HAUNTED.

BY EMMA ALICE BROWNE.

Shrive me, father! for the twilight's
Silver phantasm falleth dim,
And the wild sea's rolling dirges
Swell the solemn vesper-hymn.
O'er the hills one glorious planet
Throbs and glitters in the blue—
Some far door of heaven, where smiling
Stands the Angel of the Dew.

Evening, in her shadowy palace,
Dreaming at her lattice-bars,
Down the azure slopes of Silence
Spills the blossom of her stars.
'Neath yon hollow rim of darkness,
Lo! the new moon's golden ring
From the wasted hand of Twilight
Drops like a forgotten thing!

Shrive me, of the sin and sorrow,
Vain regrets, and lost delight;
For the tragic mask of Memory
Shrouds my lonely soul to-night!
And as wanes yon flush of crimson,
Fades the rose of youth away;
But the thorns of life's long sorrow
Press my bleeding brows for aye!

WINNING HER WAY.

By MRS. SOUTHWORTH,

AUTHOR OF "BRITOMARTE, THE MAN-HATER," "SELF-MADE," "THE HIDDEN HAND," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER LXXVIII.

LITTLE LENNY'S ENEMY.

Where the haters meet
In the crowded city's horrible street.
BROWNING.

Pina was right in her surmise as to the manner of little Lenny's abduction. And he really had been carried off by one of the two men whom she had detected in watching him.

And this necessitates the explanation of some circumstances, which, however, did not become known until some time afterward.

It not unfrequently happens that the heirs of an estate, or a title long held in abeyance and supposed to be extinct, are poor and obscure people, quite ignorant of their connection with, or right in, such an inheritance.

The claim recently confirmed by the House of Lords is a case in point. The claim to the Barony of Kilcrichtoun is another.

Alexander Lyon was totally uninformed as to his right to the title and estate of Kilcrichtoun until his visit to England and Scotland, when, in searching the records of his mother's family, he discovered the facts that led to his subsequent action in claiming the barony.

But the investigations that ensued developed other facts, and brought forward other heirs, or rather one other, who would surely have been the heir had Alexander been out of existence.

This was a descendant of a younger sister of that ancestress through whom Alexander Lyon claimed the title.

The name of this man was Clarence Everage. He was that most to be pitied of all human creatures—a poor gentleman, with more children than means to support them; more mouths to feed than money to find food; more intellect than integrity; more refinement than firmness. A man now about thirty-five years of age, with a long, hopeless life before him; a man with some beauty of person, dignity of presence, and graciousness of manner; with sensitive feelings, and delicate tastes, and soft white hands; a man who loved fragrant baths and fresh linen every day; and cool, clean, quiet rooms to live in; and well-dressed, soft-speaking, light-stepping people about him; and respect and attention and observance from all who came in contact with him; one who, loving to be happy and comfortable himself, loved still more to make others happy and comfortable; one naturally more prone to confer favors than to ask them; more willing to give than to take; naturally rather vain than proud, sensitive than irritable, and weak than wicked.

And yet a man who had to live in mean lodgings in a small, dark house, in a narrow dirty street in the Strand, where in two musty stuffy rooms he crowded his wife, who was as refined and delicate as himself, and six little girls, who would have been beautiful had they not suffered so much from confined air, bad food and scant clothing.

His position really was not his fault. England, and especially London, is so fearfully overcrowded; the competition in all trades, professions and occupations is so hopelessly great.

He was an usher in a third-rate London school, and he had an income barely sufficient to support himself in comfort; and of course it will be said he ought not to have married.

Ah! but Nature had fooled him in his youth as she fools so many. And yet I take that back. I will utter no such blasphemy against Holy Nature. No doubt Nature is always right, and it is always well that children should be born, even though they should suffer cruelly and die early, since they are born for the eternal life, through to which this earthly life is but a short, rough gateway, soon passed.

But without excusing themselves with any such hypothesis as this, the young man and young girl had followed Nature, taken the leap in the dark, and plunged head—no, *heart* foremost, into their imprudent marriage. And the natural consequences ensued. The beautiful children came, as unhesitatingly as if they were entering upon a heritage of wealth, health and happiness, instead of want, illness and misery; and every year added to their number.

The wretched father groaned for himself and his wife.

But the gentle mother reminded him that Heaven, in afflicting them with lighter trials, had always spared them the one great trial that they never could be able to bear—namely, the loss of their children. Not one of the little ones had been taken from them. Each and all had fought valiantly and successfully through measles, whooping-cough, scarlet fever, and the rest; but whether *because* of, or *in spite* of the cheap quack medicines the impoverished parents poured down their throats, I cannot say.

It was when they were expecting their seventh child that Clarence Everage, who had been hunted out by Alexander Lyon and the lawyers, was suddenly called from his obscurity to bear witness in the investigation of Mr. Lyon's claim to the Barony of Kilcrichtoun.

It was but a link in the chain of evidence that he was to furnish. But any information he was expected to be able to give was as nothing compared to the tremendous revelation that was about to be made to himself.

He, the poor usher, starving in a miserable third-floor back in Wellington street, Strand—heir-presumptive to a barony!—the ancient Barony of Kilcrichtoun! And but for this intrusive foreigner actually Baron of Kilcrichtoun himself. For be it remembered that Clarence Everage knew nothing whatever of Alexander Lyon's wife and child.

The investigation, as you know, terminated in Alexander's favor.

And this witness and self-styled heir-presumptive was liberally remunerated and sent home to his poor lodgings, pale wife and pining children, to brood over the vicissitudes of this life—to brood until he, whose temper had through all his trials been sweet, kind and cheerful, became soured and embittered and sorely tempted.

What right, he asked himself, had this man—whose branch of the Kilcrichtoun family had been self-expatriated for generations—to come over here and claim the ancient barony?

He was not a Scotchman, nor even an Englishman, that he should hold it.

And what good did it do him, after all?

Beyond the mere title, the new baron cared little for the inheritance. He had not even visited Kilcrichtoun. While to him, the poor usher, what a god-send, what a treasure, what a paradise it might have been. This estate, which was nothing to the wealthy Virginian, would have been everything to himself.

He, had he possessed it, would have sold one-half the land to get funds to cultivate the other half. He would have pulled down the most ruinous parts of the castle to get materials to build up the better part of it. And he would have employed the starving tenants of the little hamlet in repairing his dwelling and tilling his ground, and a part of the wages he paid them would have come back to himself in the form of rents.

He, the despised usher, oppressed by master and chaffed by pupils, would then be lord of the manor, with servants and tenantry dependant upon him.

His poor wife, who was looked down upon by small shop-keepers and snubbed by her laundress, would be a baroness and "my lady."

His pale little girls, bleached by the fogs of London, would grow strong and rosy on the bracing air of the Highlands.

All this would happen, if only he, and not this interloping American, were Baron of Kilcrichtoun.

He brooded too constantly and profoundly over the advantages that must have accrued to him had he been the fortunate inheritor of Kilcrichtoun, as might have happened had it not been for this interloping stranger who had no business in the country.

He felt a morbid interest in the foreigner who was so fortunate as to succeed to the title, and be able to disregard the small estate that came with it.

LITTLE LENNY IN MOTHER ROOTER'S DEN.

He took pains to learn as much as possible of Lord Kilcrichtoun's history. He was often in his lordship's company, in streets and shops and other common ground where they could meet on equal terms. He talked much to him and of him, and so learned more of his antecedents than was known to any one else out of the family in London.

He often met Alexander in his well-known haunts, walked with him, sat with him, and smoked with him. Occasionally, at Alick's invitation, he ate and drank with him.

Why not? If Lord Kilcrichtoun was unmarried, as he was generally supposed to be, then Clarence Everage was heir presumptive to the title and estate.

True, he knew that the present baron was some five or six years younger than himself, and in that view of the case there was little hope of the inheritance.

But, on the other hand, Alexander, like the generality of American men, was tall and lank, thin and sallow, with that appearance of ill health which was not real, but which was greatly enhanced by the careworn and haggard expression of countenance which had characterized his face ever since his abandonment of Drusilla.

So upon the whole, Clarence Everage, gazing gloomily upon Lord Kilcrichtoun, thought the chances of his lordship's death by consumption, and of his own accession to the title and estate, within a year or two, were very good.

"If only," he said to himself, "the fool should not in the meantime marry and have an heir. That would make the case hopeless indeed."

This anxiety lest Lord Kilcrichtoun should marry and have an heir before death should claim him, so preyed upon the poor gentleman's spirits that he watched over his lordship more carefully, and inquired about him more anxiously than ever.

In the places where they chanced to meet, he could neither see nor hear any sign of the misfortunes he dreaded. No one knew whether his lordship was meditating matrimony or not; no rumor of his contemplating conjugal life was afloat.

Of course the impoverished gentleman in his threadbare coat, limp linen and broken gloves, could not go into those circles from which Lord Kilcrichtoun would be likely to select a bride; and so, though Everage in their mutual resorts learned nothing to alarm him, he was tormented with uneasiness as to what might be going on out of his sight in places from which his poverty excluded him.

He went into coffee-rooms, not to partake of the refreshments for which he could not pay, but to look at the fashionable news, longing to see at what dinners, dances, or conversaziones, he who was keeping him out of his estate had been seen, and fearing to find, under the head of "APPROACHING MARRIAGES IN HIGH LIFE," some announcement of the calamity he so much dreaded—the impending marriage of the baron. But of course he never found anything of the sort.

"I hope the fellow has too much sense—yes, and too much conscience, to think of taking a wife. Men in his wretched state of health should never marry; for when they do, they always entail their infirmities upon any children they may happen to have," said Everage, with virtuous emphasis; for, his wish being father to his thought, he had fully persuaded himself that Alexander was in a very bad way—a doomed man, rushing with railroad rapidity to the grave.

"If he will only refrain from marriage for a year or two all will be well," said Everage to himself, as visions, not of wealth, rank and grandeur, but simply of independence, respectability and comfort floated before his eyes.

Sitting in his small, stifling room, surrounded by his little pale girls and his invalid wife, breathing the heavy city air, he thought of Kilcrichtoun that might yet soon be his own. He saw the forests of fragrant pine and feathery firs; the fields of oats and barley; the streams full of trout and salmon; the mountains with their game; the old tower with its cool rooms. He saw his wife and daughters blooming with health and smiling with happiness; he felt the bracing breezes of the Highlands fan his brow. Sitting in his stuffy little room, he saw and felt all this as in a vision, and he longed and prayed, oh how earnestly, that this vision might yet be realized.

But a very great shock was at hand for him.

One day, while Lord Kilcrichtoun and himself were walking on Trafalgar square, they met a nurse and child, with whom his lordship immediately stopped to speak.

At the very first sight of the child, Everage was struck with its unmistakeable likeness to Lord Kilcrichtoun. And when the baron took the boy in his arms, and hugged and kissed him with effusion, Everage looked on in surprise and disapprobation, for he thought that he knew his lordship was unmarried, even while he detected the relationship between the two.

But Alexander took his son, and, desiring his friend and the child's nurse to wait for him there, he crossed over to the Strand, and went into a toy-shop.

Left alone with the girl, Everage was sorely tempted to question her, but a sense of honor and delicacy prevented his doing so.

After a few minutes, Alexander returned to the spot, leading the little boy, who had his hands full of toys.

"Take him home to his mother now, nurse. The air is too sultry to keep him out longer," he said, kissing his child and delivering him over to Pina.

When the girl had carried off her charge, the two gentlemen walked on a little while in silence.

Everage, in his anxiety, was the first to speak.

"That is a very handsome little boy," he said.

"Yes, he is a fine little fellow," answered Alick.

"He is very like you," continued Everage.

"I suppose he must be since even I can see the likeness."

"And he is very fond of you," persevered Everage.

"Yes," answered Alick in a very low tone.

"Your nephew, of course?" inquired Everage, after a little hesitation, hoping that, after all, such might be the relationship of the baby to the man.

"No, he is not my nephew. I have not, nor ever had, sister or brother to give me niece or nephew. I am a lonely man, Everage."

"Ah!" sighed the other, with a look of sympathy,—but he thought in his heart, "So much the better!"

"But—he is my son, Everage!" said Alick, with emotion.

"Your son?" exclaimed the would-be heir of the barony.

It was what he had at first suspected, even he thought Lord Kilcrichtoun was unmarried; but yet he was ill-at-ease, and, out of his anxiety, burst this exclamation:

"I did not know that you had a wife."

"Nor *have* I! nor can I *ever* have—that is the curse of my life! But I had one once. The subject is a painful one, Everage!"

"I *beg* your pardon," said the poor gentleman, with real regret that he had torn open an unsuspected wound, and real sympathy for the evident sufferings of the victim, felt amid all the disappointment and dismay with which he heard of the existence of Lord Kilcrichtoun's son and heir, and the consequent blasting of all his own hopes of the inheritance.

The tone and look of sympathy touched Alexander's lonely heart. He longed to speak to some one, of his sorrows; to some one with whom it might be discreet and safe to deposit the secret troubles of his life. To whom could he so well confide them as to this poor gentleman, who seemed to possess some fine feelings of delicacy and honor, and who was certainly by circumstances far removed from those circles in which Alexander would abhor to have his domestic miseries made known.

"There is no offence," said Alexander, answering the last words of Everage; "you could not have known the tenderness of the chord you touched. And I thank you now for the kindness your tones and looks expressed. Come! shall we hail a hansom, and go to Véry's to lunch?"

"Thanks,—with pleasure!" said Everage, who always keenly appreciated and enjoyed the game, the salads, and the wines at Véry's; "but"—then he glanced at his rusty, threadbare coat, his dusty old boots, and his day-before-yesterday's clean shirt-bosom.

"Oh, never mind your dress, man! Who the mischief ever dresses to go to lunch in the morning?—Cab!"

The empty hansom that was passing drew up. The two gentlemen got into it, and Alexander gave the order:

"Véry's, corner of Regent and Oxford streets."

Arrived at the famous restaurant, Alexander told the cabman to wait, and led his friend into the saloon.

There curtained off in a snug recess, and seated at a neat table, upon which was arranged a relishing repast, Alexander, while making a slight pretence of eating and drinking, told his story, or a part of it, to Clarence Everage, who listened attentively, even while doing full justice to the good things set before him.

"You will understand now," said Lord Kilcrichtoun, in conclusion, "how it is, that though I am a husband and a father, I have neither wife nor child."

"That is very deplorable, if it is really so," said the poor man, with a real compassion for sorrows that he was inclined to consider much heavier than he had been called upon to endure. For what, he asked himself, were the worst pangs of toil, care and want compared to the grief that would be his portion should he, in any way, lose his own fond wife and dear children?—"Very, very lamentable, if it is indeed true! But let us hope it is not so; that your imagination exaggerates the circumstance. Let us trust that the quarrel is not irreconcilable; that the husband has still a wife, the father still a child."

"No, I have no wife, nor ever shall have one; for though Drusilla is neither dead nor divorced, she is hopelessly estranged from me. I have no wife, nor ever shall have one."

"But you have a child. He at least is not estranged from you."

"No, but he belongs to his mother, who bore him in peril of her own life, and has nurtured him tenderly and loves him fondly, I know. He belongs to her."

"But the *law* gives him to you. You can claim him when you will."

"But I would cut off my right hand, I would lay down my life, before I would take him from his mother, or do anything else to give her pain."

"But, man, he is your heir!"

"Yes, he is my heir and only child. If he should live, of course he will inherit Kilcrichtoun. If he should not, why the barony will go to some distant branch of the family, unearthed, in the investigation set on foot by my lawyers, when I laid claim to the title and estates. And—why, bless my soul, old fellow, it may go to you! May it not?"

"Failing yourself and heirs of your body, it may," replied the poor gentleman, gravely. And then he pushed back his chair and showed signs of impatience to be off. The usher was allowed but half an hour to take his lunch, and even now he was due at his school-room and in danger of a reprimand from his principal.

Alexander perceived his uneasiness and rang the hand-bell that stood upon the table.

Everage took out his purse.

"Put that up, if you please, Everage. I invited you here; and you are my guest," said Alexander, taking out *his* purse.

"See here, Kilcrichtoun! upon one pretence or another you *always* contrive to do this thing. Now I am not going to stand it any longer. Unless you let me foot the bill sometimes, and unless you let me foot it *now*, I can never lunch with you again," said the poor gentleman, with much dignity; then turning to the waiter who at that instant made his appearance, he added—"Let me have our bill immediately."

The mercury vanished to execute the order.

"But, really, Everage——" began Alexander.

"But, really, Kilcrichtoun," interrupted the poor gentleman, "though this is too small a matter to dispute about, you must let me have my will."

Alexander gave way.

The waiter came and put the bill in Everage's hands, and the usher, who had that day received his second quarter's salary, amounting to barely fifteen pounds, paid thirty shillings for their lunch, and bestowed half a crown on the waiter who served them.

Alexander sighed and groaned in the spirit as he saw this; but he could do nothing on earth to prevent it, or to remedy it. What in the world is one to do in such a case with a sensitive, poor gentleman? He would be alive to all your ruses, and feel hurt by them and defeat them. Alexander would rather have paid ten times the amount from his own ample means than seen the usher discharge the bill from his slender stock.

Then they arose from the table and went back to their cab.

And Alick ordered the cabman to drive to the street where the school-house in which Everage served was situated, and he dropped the usher.

I declare that up to this day Clarence Everage had entertained no idea of gaining his ends by evil means.

But the story that he had heard from Alexander was a startling and curious and interesting one; and he could not help brooding over it and speculating upon it. Lord Kilcrichtoun had a wife and child! That fact at first view seemed very fatal to Everage's hopes of ever succeeding to the title; but upon closer consideration it was not so. Lord Kilcrichtoun was hopelessly estranged from his wife; but he was not divorced from her, nor free to marry again. He had but one child, his son and heir; and if anything should happen to this child, Lord Kilcrichtoun, in his peculiar circumstances, could not hope for other legal offspring, and Everage would be quite secure in his position as heir presumptive of the barony.

And Alexander really looked paler, thinner, and more cadaverous than ever! Truly in much worse health than before! Clearly not long for this world! And if anything should happen to the child before his father's death, Everage would not long be kept out of his inheritance!

If anything should happen to the child! Dangerous speculation! In monarchies it is treason even to *imagine* the death of the sovereign. And it is so with much good reason, since such imaginings often realize themselves.

It could not be treason; but it was treachery in Clarence Everage even to imagine the removal of the little child that stood between him and the inheritance of Kilcrichtoun. It was not only wrong but perilous for him to do so. But it seemed as if he could not help it. Day and night he brooded over the idea, with a morbid intensity akin to monomania. And there was his poverty, and the pale faces of his poor wife and little girls, to goad him on. And there was that painful computation of pounds, shillings, and pence, that agonized straining of his soul to make his meagre wages meet their merest wants. And now the cruel extravagance into which his pride and sensitiveness had betrayed him in paying for that lunch at Véry's had almost ruined him for this quarter. There was now no possible way in which he could make the two ends meet for the time.

And he knew, as only the experienced in such matters can know, and he dreaded as only the proud and sensitive can dread, the troubles that must follow—the degrading squabbles with his landlady, the humiliating apologies to the butcher and the baker—nay, the sight of his wife's shabby dress and his little daughters' all but bare feet.

And he thought how different all this would be were he the heir of Kilcrichtoun, as he should be but for Alexander Lyon's son.

He thus "imagined" the death of the child and the advantages that must accrue to himself in that event. But would he have "compassed" the death of the child for any such advantages?

Oh, no! not for Kilcrichtoun, or a hundred Kilcrichtoun's, would he have committed such a crime. But—he was too prone to consider certain facts in the statistics of population, life and death; how it was set down that more than one-half the children born, died before they had attained the age of three years. He supposed little Lenny to be about two years and a half old. He wondered whether the child had passed safely through measles, whooping-cough, scarlet fever, and all the other perilous "ills" to which children's "flesh is heir," or whether he had yet to encounter all or any of them.

He had gathered from Lord Kilcrichtoun's narrative that the child lived with his mother and her friends at the Morley House, and that he was often taken by his nurse to walk in Trafalgar square and its vicinity.

And so, morning, noon, and evening, when not engaged in his school duties or with his family, he prowled about the neighborhood, to waylay little Lenny and his nurse, and watch over his health.

One day, when no one else was very near, he saw Pina and her charge together, and accosted them.

"How do you do, my little man?" he inquired, patting Lenny on the head or, rather, the hat.

"Me not man—me itty boy," answered Lenny, staring.

"Oh, little boy, are you? Well, how do you do, little boy?" smiled Everage.

"Me very well,—how you?" politely responded Lenny.

"I'm very well too."

"Me dad you very well too."

"Thank you."

"You dot itty boy home?"

"No, I've got no little boy at home; but I have got six little girls."

"Sit itty dirl? Me habben dot itty dirl home."

"Haven't you? what a pity!"

"You bin you itty dirl hee me?"

"Yes, I'll bring my little girls to see you," said the poor gentleman, turning away from the child with some emotion, and beginning to talk with Pina,—who was looking on and smiling with proud delight at the bright intelligence and gracious manners of her little charge.

"He is a very fine little fellow, nurse," said Everage.

"Yes, sir; lots of ladies and gentlemen, who stop to speak to him, say the same," answered Pina, gazing with satisfaction upon her little Lenny.

"And he is very like his father," pursued Everage.

"Well, sir, I never could see the likeness myself, I'm sure," answered the girl resentfully, and wondering how this stranger came to know who was little Lenny's father.

"He seems to be perfectly healthy?" went on the would-be heir presumptive.

"Why, he never had any real illness for an hour, sir. Even when he was teething, he only ailed a little—nothing to speak of at all, sir."

"Ah, well, he's like a young bear—all his troubles are before him."

"Indeed, sir; then I think you are more of a bear yourself to be a-saying of such things! Come, Master Leonard, let us go home—mamma will be wanting us."

"Dood-by! come hee me soon," said Lenny, holding out his hand to the stranger.

"Good-bye, my little lad!" said Everage, pressing the child's offered hand as he turned away.

Little Lenny and his nurse went back to the Morley House, and Everage bent his steps to the Newton Institute for Young Gentlemen.

"More than one-half the children that are born alive die before they reach the age of three years, do they? Well—clearly this youngster belongs to the half that live! Never has had any of those infantile disorders that slay infants of 'two years old and under,' with a massacre more terrible than that of Herod of Galilee. Ah! but the little fellow has them all to meet, for they are sure to come, sooner or later; yes, but he has a fine constitution with which to fight disease; well, but still this is certain, that children of robust frames, full-fleshed and full-blooded, never get over these inflammatory fevers as easily as do those of thinner and feebler organization. These very healthy children are exceedingly apt to go off in these acute attacks of disease. Master Lyon, Master of Kilcrichtoun, you will have to take the risk with the rest."

Such were the reflections of Everage as he bent his steps that afternoon to the Newton Institute, and while he sat at his desk examining boys in their Latin and Greek exercises and algebraic and geometrical problems; and while he sauntered sorrowfully and wearily home to his gloomy lodgings.

But he hated himself with a righteous hatred for these evil haunting thoughts, that he had no moral power to exorcise.

From what he had heard from Lord Kilcrichtoun, and from what he had observed with his own eyes, some things seemed very certain.

As that Lord Kilcrichtoun would never be legally divorced from his first wife, and therefore would never be free to take a second; that he would never be reconciled to her, and therefore never have another child; that his lordship was in a very bad way and could not long hold the barony of Kilcrichtoun; and, finally, that little Lenny would be the future Baron of Kil-

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erticious, unless he should very soon die, or—*disappear*; and, finally, that little Lenny was not inclined to die please anybody!

But there was that other alternative:—he might disappear—he might clandestinely as child-ren had often done before now, he might disappear forever.

I know not at what precise time this last alternative presented itself to the poor gentleman's mind. But it would not be banished, it clung to him, it tempted him, it nearly crazed him.

He prowled about Trafalgar Square, and watched little Lenny and his nurse, and informed himself as to the child's haunts and habits.

If Flim never spoke of him "poor white herring," as she subsequently called him, it was because he was only one of several persons who, seeing daily at the house the nurse would be out with the child, would stop to notice him, to make an idea, or—what they termed—to talk to him, being charmed by his infantile beauty, intelligence, and gentleness. And, even, if the nurse had told the mother of this stranger's seeming partiality for the child, the information would not have surprised her, for to Frederick it seemed inevitable that every one who saw her poetess boy must be charmed and delighted with his beauty and loveliness.

So, unsuspected and unrestricted, Everage "followed" to see a great deal of little Lenny, a great deal more than even his father saw of him.

But Alexander was eminently ignorant of these interviews, for Flim did not "like" little Lenny's father well enough to gossip with him on this or any other subject, or indeed to open her mouth to him with one unnecessary word.

And the poor gentleman, for his part, took good care never to approach the child while his father happened to be near him.

In fact, of late days, Clarence Everage had been his little of Lord Allerthorpe's money, and his latent sense of honor or sting of conscience, the poor gentleman had kept out of the way of the wealthy bards. Since Everage had been spoken of as the chances of the child's death or the practicability of his "disappearance," he would be lying himself in his bed and call-cite-father in the face, much less to eat or drink with him, as had for a time been his frequent custom.

But Everage brooded over the possibility of little Lenny's "disappearance," as he called it, until, as I said, it began to haunt Frederick's brain.

The vague dream "disappearance" began to shape itself into the very distinct idea, "abduction."

Children had been abducted before now, for less reason and with more difficulty than would be the case with this child; for how great a reason, almost how just a cause, for the crime, self, had he for abducting Leonard Lyon; and how easily, in the child's unprotected walks, might he be snatched up and carried off; and how completely in crowded London might he be concealed.

The idea grew and formed itself into a purpose.

CHAPTER LXXIX.

THE ABDUCTION.

In a hansom cab at midnight.

There was at this time a wretched old hag, who, summer and winter, rain and shine, sat under the window of St. Mary's to thread begging —but not saintly, for to have done so would have been to have broken the municipal laws which have drawn the police upon her and consigned her to the work-house.

On the contrary, she was extremely pedaling in a small way. In her table-like hands she had a bundle of matches, which she silently tendered to every passer by. The majority of these were workhouse, and were not, really intended for sale, but for a blind to the police that they might be begging; and everybody understood this as well as the old; for, though the lower orders have quaint hue lips to ask for alms, every fluttering rag about the woman's tongue, and every look a wheedle.

So occasionally a passer by would drop a halfpenny to the hand that offered the matches and then go on its way.

But the great stream of people pouring through that crowded thoroughfare usually passed without noticing her; for the frequency of such beggars, and of much worse sight of misery in the London streets, and the utter impossibility of relieving them all, hardened the hearts of the people.

But the poor pity the poor. And our poor gentleman, passing the poor beggar twice every day, paid her—gilded her, even—sixpence; but he once picked his pocket of his coarse white linen handkerchief, and he knew the dark blue cotton doubt. And almost every day, in passing, he gave her a half-penny or a penny, and, when he got gold, he gave her a sixpence.

This is all the regard with which she had sat there, and in which he had passed twice a day for going and returning to and from his unhappy home, he had never happened to see any one else give anything.

Of course he knew that she must make something by selling there, or she would not stay; but it was so very little and so very seldom, that he never knew it long enough to remember it. And from all this he concluded that she was steadily poor.

He often wondered where she lived, how she slept, what she ate, with whom she kept company, and who were her kinsfolks, if she had any.

That she consorted with the lowest thieves and vagrants, with the most degraded men and women ready for any crime, he felt morally certain. Had she not picked the pocket of her benefactor?

But still he pitied her and almost justified her; for he knew what poverty and his bitter compatriots were, and besides, with his charity was large his moral sense was not very clear; and, poor as he was, he would have given the very pocket-handkerchief he possessed before he would have prosecuted this miserable old woman, or even withheld from her the wretched recompense of the quarterly stagnore.

Now, when the vague idea of "*disappearance*" singed itself into the distinct thought of abduction, and the thought began to take a purpose, and the purpose strengthened into resolution, he unconsciously fixed upon the woman under St. Mary's in Strand, and believed that he could make her subservient to his use.

One rainy day he went out at noon for the usual round. It was a day and an hour when there were comparatively few passengers in the street. He went in search of the old woman whom he found in her accustomed place, but backed up close against the wall to secure some partial shelter from the pelting rain.

"Have you no umbrella—have you an old wreck of one?" were the first words addressed to her by Everage.

"Unfortunitly! Bless the dear gentleman, I never had a unfortunitly in my life! How would the likes of me have a unbrecrelly? They been for the rich people, sure!"

"But your knees are getting quite wet," said Everage.

"And so they is, dear gentleman, and I shall get the rheumatiz as sure as sure!" said the woman, taking the cue and beginning to whine.

"I shouldn't be surprised if you did. Why do you sit out here in this weather?"

"Good gentleman, hadn't I better sit here and sell my matches than stay at home and starve?"

"Sell your matches? Why, that's the identical box of matches you have had to sell for a

Heaven knows how long, and you haven't sold it yet."

"That is true; but, dear gentleman, I might sell them to-day—I might sell them any time! There is no telling when a stroke of luck might fall."

Everage knew she was speaking deceitfully; but he not only found excuses for her, but he found in her words an opening for his proposition.

"Yes," said he, "you are quite right. There is no telling when a stroke of luck may fall—even this very day."

"It has indeed this very day, good gentleman. Sure the sight of your handsome face is always a lucky one to me, and I knowed you was here in the rain for the chance of seeing it, if one should come to me this day."

"The sight of my face may be lucky to others; but, alas! to only one deep; it never strikes on to do the owner any good," laughed Everage, with a bitterness unperceived in the hag's hand.

"Oh! thanky, sir! Sure you're the great benefactor of the poor! May the Lord——" and here she began a string of blessings to which a bishop's benediction would seem a trifle.

"That is not the one," said Everage, trying to stop her.

"Not the one! Now tell me your name. You see as long as I don't know it you have never heard it."

"Forster, sir; Margaret Forster, at your honor's service; born in lawful wedlock of honest parents, your worship, and christened in the very same church as you see before you dimmicile, your honor, over yon."

"Well, Mother Forster," said the poor gentleman, "I have a very little to give away, and you do a service for me, if it should be your good fortune."

"It is. would I do a service for your honor's worship? I'll do anything you bid me, and put it in her hand and chuckling; for she really thought that the gentleman was going to give her all one, which must be paid for handsomely—on the nail, too, for she knew that was the way of the black-mill. "And is it Margaret Booter as you will stir do that service for the gentleman? Sure as has kept her from starving this many a day! Is it, my lord, as you will have to go into the Northumberland House, or Sim-Merrily-Strand either, ever done for the likes of me, that I would refuse to do a favor for a gentleman? Sure whom bounty have given me many a half ounces of tea and sugar, and a coal! Sure nothing's too kindest?"

"And I have no grudge against the church, or the palace either, and wish them no harm, but all good, as I'll tell you."

"But about this girl? Is she—your grandchild, your honor? Is it Sally and looking down in your alds chamber?"

"No, no, Mother Forster, the eldest ones, and quite to be depended on."

"Ah! I'm glad to hear, I will look in at your place as mine o'clock this evening."

"Yes, I shall be glad to do your honor and us, too. The Lord bless you, sir. But mind it's Mother Forster's, the sign of Margaret Booter's, and Nelson's Head in search of a street that I have called myself by, and not Sally Lyon, as I've been ashby known to the police under another name.

"Ah! I'll be at it! Sally and looking down in the cavernous mouth, he thought of Dore's picture of the infernal regions. An infernal regions.

He shuddered as he turned into Black street, Drury Lane, which was swarming—as the pavements of dark, and birth lanes and alleys, from which Everage turned into Broad street, were crowded, but sadly enlisted, even at noonday.

The appearance of a gentleman was shocked and revolted. The streets were narrow and dirty, the houses high, and the windows few and shuttered, and here and there towards each end of the street the south shone upon the dead, shutting out much of the light and the air that might have visited the accursed place. The gentleman felt as if he were in some close, dark and stagnant window sashes filled up with old hats and bonnets, through which a miserable light was, occupied for the most part, by rum-sugar, and by the wretches in the last stage of misery and drowsy children. These groups were generally of the most degraded kind, and the gentleman sang from without, or a dim candle from within, to the sight of misery.

"Heavens and earth!" thought Everage, holding his nose, "that I should have to come to this to be threaded! Sir way through the mazes of this accursed hell! Oh, Mother Lyon! Alley and Barbe Lane," these must be the waste piles of all the filth and misery of London! Heavens! Sally, by my life, she is the sink!" he added, stopping in the very centre of the most loathsome part of the town.

The house was taller, older, dirtier, and more dilapidated than any he had yet seen. It leaned over the narrow pavement, and projected beyond its leaning opposite neighbor, and it looked as if the first strong wind would blow it down in a moment.

Everage also the door-way was foul and broken, and crowded with drunken and dirty men and women.

Everage inquired of this group if this was Nelson's Head, and if Sally Lyon lodged there.

They stared at him for a minute without replying, and then one of the men, recovering from one womanished to some one within the passage, cried,

"Hallo, Reg., come here! Here's a gentleman a-looking for Sally Lyon, and says he have come with the goose's compliments to her."

A short, powerful, black-haired, bare-legged glory of street footers in the old coat and cap of the obscurity, and accosted Everage.

"Is you the gentleman as wants to see Sally?" he asked.

"I am looking for Mrs. Booter,—yes," answered Everage, scrutinising the girl, and recognising in her face the description given by the crone.

"Come along then," said Reg., leading the way through passages and up stair-cases more like ladders than stairs, and so to the very top and the middle of the street had been—for the house was immensely large—and to a door, whereon these tenement-house passages seem to open from the description given by the crone.

Everage followed his guide up four flights of stairs, and then Reg. knocked and called to a boy within the room, and the boy opened and told him to look with the opener.

Reg. then turned into a back room, with a low, sloping ceiling. It was wretchedly furnished, or rather lack of furniture—a bed which was a mere heap of foul rags, a shaky little wooden table, a rickety chair, a rusty iron kettle, and a cracked tea-cup and saucer were the only means and appliances of comfort or necessity there.

The only person in the room was old Mother Booter, who was squatted on the only chair, with her elbows on her knees and her head in her hands.

Reg. up to meet her visitor, and gave him her chair, saying:

"You are very welcome to my poor place, kind gentleman. Sit down, sir."

And she seized herself on the side of the bed, that he might not hesitate to take the chair.

He looked at the proffered chair, and took from his pocket a newspaper, and spread over the bottom of the chair before sitting down on it.

"Ah, sir, I see—you gentlefolks blame us a deal for being dirty, but how can we help it? We can't get bread enough to eat; and where have we to get the extra penny to buy a bit of soap to wash ourselves and our houses, or the hem-cords to rod up our beds, or to get the sixpence to buy a broom. Ah, sir, you gentlefolks should know what you are a-talking on before you blame us for our poverty and dirt."

"I am not blaming you," said Everage.

And then, to change the subject, he remarked:

"I am sure very high up here; you are high-up in the world in one sense, if you are not in another."

"Ah, yes, sir! but what am I to do? The garret or the cellar is the choice we poor creatures has to make. All the home between them is dear for the likes of us. And, be the same token, there's little to choose atween them. It's hot and a-stifling in the one to live up here; and when, of a evening, I'm a-spouting of them stairs,—Ah! it's death to many on 'em—steps I mean,—I know it to my sorrow, for I have come on 'em often, as I panted by 'em, and stopped on every landing to catch my breath and rest, as I often thinks I've a mind to never live in a cellar. But then, I thinks, as once I did, that I'll never live up so many stairs again if—So on to the whole, I says to myself it is the highest climb and to get rest on my bed at back and grean."

And Everage knew was a very wise one. But listen if you are faithful to us in the service I've undertook to perform, your worship, you shall be a five-door front of any such a house as this. And I shall have a room to myself, and a room which I certainly shall be, if you should be successful in your undertaking."

"Been yer honor! I will be faithful as faithful can be, you haven't told me yet what the service is going to be."

"I came here to-night to tell you, and I will tell you now, that the child—the—the—the—poetess I inquired Everage, looking around and seeing Reg. at his elbow, "has been abducted, and that himself and the crone were alone or second in the house."

"Yes," answered Mrs. Booter, "the coast is clear. The gentlemen have all left the house, though, because I insisted to 'em as they might be watched."

"Where are they, then?"

"Up in the attics. I sent them there to wait your honor's pleasure. And there they shall stop, if you please, for I'm sure they're safe so be you would rather trust the business to me and Reg. Reg., I can, do it alone, for I'm sure you never know any thing of it; but if your honor would rather trust to them, I'm sure they're just trusty as trusty—why I'll go call 'em."

"Oh and call them—I will take a look at them, and see if I can trust them."

The beldam went out into the passage, and climbed the ladder leading to a trap-door in the roof, and summoned her brothers; and presently Everage heard them descending down the ladder; and she brought them into the presence of Everage.

They were two ill-looking fellows enough, both sorely scarred and pitted with the small-pox.

The elder was tall, sallow, black-haired and black-eyed.

The younger was short and thick set, with broad shoulders, bull neck and bullet head covered with a thick shock of red hair.

Everage turned pale.

They came slow and sullen before him and pulled their forelocks as they made their bows.

"Well, my men, are you to be trusted in a service of a delicate performance as to be of recourse to your own profit?" inquired Everage, with a voice that shook.

Now the only ideas the ruffians gained from this question was that there were secret services required, for which they were to be paid. So each one of them, the dark one, replied:

"Your honor may confide in me, your honor, that we does faithful. But it depends on what the service is, your honor, before as we undertakes it.

"But if we undertakes it, we performs it faithful," added the other, the red one.

Everage heard a footstep on the door; and now all gather around me. You two men, and you, Reg., sit upon the bedstead. Mother, come close to me as I sit upon the chair before you."

All did as they were desired, and Everage began to whisper.

A child to be carried off, your honor! that's not a service for you to undertake, my dear ruffian.

"You are you ever paid handsomely for jobs that are over easy and over safe! But I can tell you that this service is difficult as well as dangerous."

"Ah! from a home, your honor!" ingurgled the dark ruffian.

"No, from the street."

"Carry off a child from the crowded streets of London, your honor! That seems to be impossible," put in the red ruffian.

"Hold your tongue, Roger," said his black brother.

"Now don't go quarrel before the gentleman! I Master Everage, I'll do it, or my name's not Reg. Booter, as sich!" put in the crone.

"Hold you still, I will undertake to carry off a child from the streets of London; and I'll not only undertake to carry it off, but I'll stick to it, as perished Neil Roger, who was called thus by his friends.

"If you will find that it is very easy. I have studied it well, and have got it all planned. It is perfectly successful."

"Then tell us, your honor," said the black one.

"Well, listen," whispered Everage, in a very low voice. "This child is about two years and a half old. He is the child of a gentleman who knows not much of English life. He is sent out to play in the streets, and has been provided with bread and cheese and a bottle of beer, and a penny to buy whatever he may fancy. He is sent out every day, and every day, and he should have a chance of being stolen, for he has a penny to spend that he might otherwise show them to her brethren.

"Now, I have seen this child, and have often stopped on his way to his school, to leave a penny with him, and have found him the person, which, as I have seen pearls and turquoise about them, and have seen him at other times, or twice as much more. And finally, when I have spoken to him, I have found in which the child's disappearance, you shall have a comfortable provision for life, and a home for life in your place."

The men wrangled and haggled with their employer for a higher price for their crime, and the beldam joined in the contest, and ten—fifteen pounds each down and a crown a week for keeping Lenny a month.

After this, Everage left the house, promising to be there again at the same hour next day, and every day, until he should have a chance of carrying off the boy with safety, and that she might afterwards show them to her brethren.

Everage left the house, and as he passed and stepped on his way to his school, to leave a penny with him, he found him engaged in marbles, and to watch for the possible appearance of Everage, and to be ready to run and announce it.

The demon helped Everage to wonderful luck, for presently came Flim, leading little Lenny by the hand.

They passed quite close to where the crone squatted and Everage saw that she was about to be going up Fleet street, upon some gothic shopping.

Everage turned his back on them until they had passed and then came back to him. Then he followed them to the corner of Fleet street and saw them turn up it.

"There they are. Shall you know them again?"

"Why, I'd know'em among a hundred! That black gall, with the plaid turtuis on her head, but's her figure, with a air of a queen, and that all time there's when I watch it's a world's wonder to me how she can walk at all with that behind.

"You would not have noticed them now, perhaps, if I hadn't pointed them out."

"Yes, I should, sir, I'm sure. I don't commonly look after children and nurse-maids."

"Well, you will remember them, and take the first opportunity of pointing them out to your brethren."

"I'll bet you! Buy your honor's pardon. One of us will be on the watch all day and every day, ing until I get a chance to show 'em. And be sure I shall know 'em, your honor, I'm sure."

"So he does; well, keep him there till the nurse and child return, and then follow them home in this way; and then you can point them out to me. And, mind, I will not have a hair of your gentlemen, looking at his gold repeater, a family of children to be sole yet; so you see that I have not yet been dedicated to the necessities of his wife and children. I am a gentleman, and am not ascribed to raise money to pay the lieutenants of my regiment, of course, always know, the plan was accomplished.

Little Lenny was carried off in the manner planned by Everage; and afterwards described by him.

He was a brave little fellow, and when he saw a great crowd of people rushing on and crying, "Stop him!" and when he saw the people running up to the straw or a strange man, and hurried on, and when he saw the people surrounding him was afoot, and he laughed and shouted, "Top him!" with the rest. If he was not stopped.

But soon the frames of the chloroform overpowered him, and he was carried off in the murderer of his captor.

Reg. was keeping the old shawl over the child, taking his way through the darkened streets, and so to the house in the dirty alley in Number Nine Blood Alley.

He hurried up stairs to the attic room and placed the still unconscious child in the arms of his mother, telling her that the job was done,

MY SHIP.

BY N. G. SHEPHERD.

I have a ship that has sailed the sea
Through many a changeful year,
Homeward bound, with rich gifts for me,
She is drawing hourly near;
Her masts and spars are of shining gold,
And of crystal are her shrouds,
And her silken sails, to the sun unrolled,
Are white as the noonday clouds.

No captain or crew has this ship of mine
That sails the pathless sea,
[illegible]ge her course by the stars that shine,
To bring her home to me;
No captain or crew to keep her right
When storms would overwhelm,
[illegible]ways by day and always by night
An angel guides the helm.

The costliest freight that a ship can hold
The ocean wave she stems,
Is more precious by far than gold,
And gifts more rare than gems;
The jewels that shine with such lustrous light
In the diadem of kings,
Are as dross in my longing sight
To the matchless wealth she brings.

Then I watch when skies are clear
For her to come to land,
And often I listen in hopes to hear
Her keel as it grates the sand;
But the golden light fades fast away
Till at last, the day is done,
And at each return of the night I say,
"She will come with the morrow's sun."

Sometimes when threatening storms draw nigh,
And boisterous winds blow loud,
And the tender face of the azure sky
Is covered o'er with cloud,
I think of the danger that is near
To my ship that sails the sea,
With an anxious feeling, born of fear,
For the gifts she brings to me.

But as soon as the boisterous wind has ceased,
And the clouds have passed away,
I say, in the strength of hope increased,
"She will surely come to-day;"
And my heart, grown bold, makes my lips to smile
At the storms that would overwhelm
My struggling ship, when I think, meanwhile,
Of the angel at her helm.

THE EVIL GENIUS.

By ELIZA A. DUPUY,
AUTHOR OF "THE WHITE TERROR," "WARNING VOICE," "THE FATAL ERROR," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XLII.

The polite greeting passed between Fenton and Nina, but after a few moments he found her at his side talking with her old animation, and using all the fascinating arts of which she was mistress to beguile his attentions from his betrothed.

Opal leaned listlessly over the railing, toying with a cluster of evergreens that grew below it, and Fenton, flattered and interested in spite of his distrust of the fair actress, yielded for a season to the old spell the enchantress had once thrown around him. Nina's magnetic eyes grew luminous, her lips eloquent with the emotions that swelled in her bosom, and Fenton, attracted, enthralled for the moment, mentally said:

"What would I give if a portion of this girl's fire and power could be infused into Opal. The one evidently loves me still with all the passion of her ardent soul, while the other only endures me. Yes—that is all; yet I would marry Opal now, if all the fiends in the Inferno rose up to oppose me. I am not going to be balked of fortune twice in so brief a space of time. I shall secure that at any rate, and I suppose, in time, she will learn to love and care for me as much as most women do for their husbands."

While these thoughts floated through his mind the syren voice talked on, and Fenton listened with charmed ear, although he had such bitter cause to dread Nina Gordon. He was tired of the rôle he was playing, and ready for anything that offered a diversion. Nina was piquante, and he no longer felt afraid of her; she had conducted herself with such calm propriety since she came to Silvermere, that he began to wonder why he should have deprecated her advent there.

The day was brilliantly clear, but the atmosphere was chill with wintry frost, and Mrs. Hastings presently appeared at the door, and said:

"It is too cold for you to remain out there, Opal; you have not been quite well for several days, and I would not have you get ill just now for any consideration. Come in, my dear, to the fire."

"Yes indeed," chimed in Fenton, "Opal must be in her highest beauty when we stand together before the altar. We will all come in, Mrs. Hastings, for it is rather chilly here."

"I am not cold at all," said Nina; "such weather as this only makes my blood bound through my veins like quicksilver. Come with me to the lake, Mr. Fenton. I have set my heart on taking a sail on it this lovely morning, and there is wind enough for that."

"Indeed you will be half frozen, Miss Gordon," remonstrated Mrs. Hastings. "I am sure it will not be safe to attempt such a thing on so cold a morning. Pray come in."

"My dear Mrs. Hastings, in the country I came from this day would be considered spring-like. I have set my heart on a sail on that pretty little sheet of water, and if Mr. Fenton ungallantly refuses to go with me and manage the boat, I will trust myself to old Simon."

Nina looked into his eyes, and in spite of his late feelings toward her, under the influence of that glance he said:

"Of course I cannot permit you to go with Simon after making such an appeal to me as that. If Opal will wrap herself up well, I think you may permit her to join us, Mrs. Hastings."

"No—thank you," said Opal, quickly. "I have no desire to go; the last time we were on the lake you came very near upsetting the boat, and I advise Miss Gordon to take Simon along at any rate, if she is in earnest about going with you."

"Indeed I am in earnest! Stay here, Mr. Fenton; I will be ready in a moment."

She dashed into the house, and almost immediately returned wrapped in a crimson shawl, with a white nubia thrown over her head. She and Fenton descended the steps, and Opal went in with her mother, wondering why Nina wished to secure a private interview with Fenton, but perfectly indifferent as to its result.

It was too late now for either of them to recede, but if such a thing were possible her betrothed was welcome to take the initiative even at the instigation of Nina Gordon. So she sunk upon a seat and gave herself up to painful reverie, while the two of whom she was thinking went toward the lake.

With light badinage Nina resumed the conversation, and Fenton passively yielded to the flattery with which she had lured him to her purpose. In assailing his weakest point she had triumphed, and the radiant glow that lit up her features was most fascinating to a worshipper of beauty like the man that walked beside her. The tiny sheet of water was a quarter of a mile distant, but Fenton did not find the way long, and when they reached the boat-house Nina suddenly said:

"Ah! this reminds me of old times!—of the days in which you and I were— Well, you know what we were to each other once, Mr. Fenton; though for you that has passed utterly away. Tell me truly, Godfrey: do you not at times wish that I were possessor of this charming place, instead of the girl you are compelling to marry you? Speak the honest truth for once in your life, and give me the only consolation I can now receive."

The passionate quiver in her voice touched him—his vanity was flattered, though he was deeply embarrassed as he replied:

"Let by-gones be by-gones, Miss Gordon. You and I are quits now, and it is best that we remain so. Shall we go on the water, or will you return to the house?"

The glance she flashed on him might have scathed him, though it gleamed through gathering tears. She dashed them away and haughtily said:

"I will go on the lake, if you please. I came hither with that purpose, and I shall not be turned from it. I have something to say to you that no other ears must hear, and you must go with me."

"Suppose I refuse to do so?" he asked. "I have no wish to hear anything you may have to communicate. It is better for both of us that we shall return to the house at once."

With taunting sarcasm she replied:

"Do you think so? I am sorry that I cannot agree [illegible]. If you are sure of your own heart, you will not be [illegible] me a few moments alone. When a lady asks of a gentleman the favor of his company for a brief season, he cannot be so churlish as to refuse it. Pray unloose the boat from its moorings, or I will do it myself, and if you will not accompany me, I will go alone."

"If you did that, you would very likely be drowned, for the water is over ten feet in depth, and I do not think that you know how to swim."

"What would it matter to you if I were drowned? You would not shed a tear over my untimely fate. Will you loosen the boat, Mr. Fenton?"

He leisurely moved down the embankment, obeyed her imperious command, and silently helped her into the fairy bark, in the stern of which cushions were placed upon the seat. Fenton knew how to manage the light craft very well, for he had often been out sailing or rowing on it with Opal. Besides, on this miniature sheet of water there could be no danger to either of them, though he wondered greatly at the sudden freak which led Nina to wish for him as her companion on such a jaunt.

The boat was soon gliding away over the clear water, and Fenton waited for his companion to speak. She at length contemptuously said:

"This is a pretty pond, but it is absurd to call it a lake, and when I take possession of the place, I intend to give it a better name."

Fenton stared at her in astonishment. With a laugh he asked:

"Are you dreaming, Nina? or have you planned to poison Mrs. Hastings and marry her husband?"

"No, thank you. I shall find a better way to what I spoke of than that. Do you know why I wished you to come out here with me, Godfrey Fenton?"

"To hear you talk as if you had lost your senses, I suppose," he replied, with a sneer.

"There you are mistaken, for I was never more perfectly in possession of them than at this moment. I brought you hither to prove to you that you are about to give your hand to a girl who has no right to these broad lands—who will bring you a much smaller dower than you anticipate."

"Ah, indeed! That is news worth hearing; but how are you to prove it to me, fair Nina?"

"I can do so—I shall do it. I will tell you a secret I have fathomed; I know who I am—I have discovered the name I am really entitled to bear."

"That must have been an interesting discovery to you, but I cannot see how I am interested in it."

"Can't you? Well—we shall soon see. I am the niece of Mr. Hastings. *He* is the Fairlie who educated me—who conceals himself behind a cloud of mystery, that he may enjoy the fortune of which he has defrauded me—the fortune that would bring *you* back to my feet, if I could reclaim it. Is it not so, Godfrey? *dearest* Godfrey!" and her voice softened to its most tender tones.

Fenton listened to this revelation in incredulous surprise. He scarcely heeded the last words, imploringly as they were spoken, flattering as they were to his self-love. He coldly said:

"Miss Gordon, this can never be true. Why should Mr. Hastings have suppressed his near relationship to you—have received you as a stranger beneath his roof, when you had such strong claims on him?"

"Ah! why indeed! unless he served his own interests by doing so?" she triumphantly asked.

"But what proof have you to bring forward that you are his niece?"

"I am satisfied of it myself, and that is sufficient. Mr. Hastings refused to tell me what the middle letter in his name stood for, but I found it out for myself, and from that and various other circumstances I drew my own conclusions. Yes—I am an heiress, and my uncle has defrauded me of the inheritance for the possession of which you are about to marry his daughter. You do not love Opal, Godfrey Fenton, although you so deftly play the part of her wooer; and if her heart could be laid bare before you, you would find there only shrinking from the bond you are so anxious to cement. Look into my eyes, if you dare, and tell me that you really care for her."

Fenton did not comply with this demand. He looked away from her as he quietly replied:

"You are under a great delusion in one respect. Even if you are the niece of Mr. Hastings, you could bring forward no claim to this estate, for it belongs to his wife. Through her mother Opal will be a great heiress; as to my feelings towards her, I decline discussing them with you."

Nina clenched her small hands and lurid fire gleamed from her light eyes. She passionately cried:

"And you—you will marry her for that money! You will trample my heart in the dust of your selfishness, though you know that for you alone has it ever beat. I am maddened with the struggle through which I have passed, and I must speak out, or die. Say that you love me, Godfrey—*me alone*, or I will throw myself into this water and end life and suffering at once."

Fenton believed that she was but acting a part, and he lightly replied:

"You would only get a good ducking, for of course I should jump in after you and rescue you in spite of your struggles. Be reasonable, Nina, and do not lay aside your natural character to assume that of a tragedy-queen. It does not suit you, I assure you."

She pressed her hand convulsively over her heart, and murmured:

"And this man I have loved as only such women as I can love!"

Then, turning fiercely upon him, she asked:

"Godfrey Fenton, do you not fear to arouse the serpent of hate that lies coiled in my heart, ready to spring into venomous life when the conviction comes to me that you have cast me off utterly and forever? Listen to me. I have never loved any but you. I cling to you in spite of all that you have done to alienate my heart. Last summer, when I wheedled that old woman into making her will in my favor, it was with the hope that, endowed with fortune, I should again be sought by you. Your machinations defeated me, but what have you gained by them? You have given up the girl to whom you were then devoted, and you are about to burden yourself with a wife chosen for you by your mother, while I—I perish for the boon of your affections!"

She cast herself wildly at his feet, and raised her eyes imploringly to his face. But she read there no answering emotion. Fenton was shocked by this unmaidenly revelation, and embarrassed by the novel position in which he found himself placed, and he could find no words with which to frame a reply. This silence became so unendurable to Nina that at length she bitterly cried:

"Speak! stab me to the heart by saying what I already know—that you dare not recede—that the love you once bore me is dead—dead as I shall soon be now!"

She cowered down in the bottom of the boat, and, with some effort, Fenton lifted her and placed her on the seat again. In gentle tones, he finally said:

"Nina, I would to God that we had never met. I hoped—I believed that you had put that dream aside forever. Remember that I have no right to speak words of love to you now, even if my heart responded to yours."

"And it does not—it [illegible] your lips. And that, to hear the words spoken [illegible] to feel that it is so. Yet, [illegible] I would have made you happy, Godfrey. If the wealth I feel sure should have been mine had not been appropriated by my uncle, you would never have deserted me. I cannot be deceived as to your feelings toward me when we first knew each other. I was the *first* love of your heart, and it is not yet too late to free yourself from the fetters with which you are bound. I will assert my rights. I will claim my fortune, at Mr. Hastings' hands, and then—*then*——"

"Nina, for God's sake, cease such language! It is unwomanly—uncalled for. If you possessed the wealth of the Rothschilds, I never could marry you—never! I have no faith in you. I should fear you,—and how much love can exist with such a feeling, I leave you to judge."

A fearful convulsion passed over her face, and a blue pallor settled around her lips. She bent her head upon her breast, and sat nervously working her fingers together.

Fenton turned the boat toward the shore and took up an oar to assist its progress forward, for the wind had suddenly fallen, leaving them in the centre of the lake.

In a low, concentrated tone, Nina at length spoke:

"So this is the end of all between us. This is the reward of the maddest love that one human heart ever held for another. Godfrey Fenton, you have been my evil genius; and I, in my turn, will be yours. Beware! remember, I bid you beware!"

"You have threatened me before to-day, Miss Gordon, but I have no fear of you. Even this melo-dramatic scene has inspired me with but one conviction, and that is, that in you the stage has lost a great actress. I believe that you might almost rival Rachel herself. But let me set you right as it regards Mr. Hastings. If you are really his niece, as you so confidently assert, he cannot have you defrauded of your fortune, for he possesses none of his own. He was a penniless lawyer when he came to this State and married a wealthy woman; but her property is all settled on herself and her daughter, and you will gain nothing by bringing forward such imaginary claims as you have spoken of."

With bitter sarcasm, Nina replied:

"And that is why you hold to your troth with Opal, I understand; the links that are forged of gold are not easily broken!"

"You are at liberty to think what you please, but my honor is bound to Miss Hastings, and I intend to redeem the pledges I have given her,—so we will say no more on that subject."

"I understand, *noblesse oblige*," said Nina, scornfully. "Put me ashore, Mr. Fenton, and forget what has lately passed between us. Since nothing is to be gained by proclaiming the discovery I have made, I shall say nothing about it. Let my uncle keep his secret. Since he is ashamed to acknowledge his dependent niece, I can live, as I have long done, upon his bounty without asking more at his hands. Now that I know I have a right to it, I shall not scruple to accept it."

Fenton was quite as anxious to end this strange interview as Nina could be, and he soon brought the boat to the flight of steps which led up to the rustic temple on the bank. As he sprang up to fasten it, Nina also arose; the light craft careened, she lost her balance, and fell over the farther side into the deep water.

Fenton sprang in after her, brought her up dripping and half-strangled, and, in a few moments, he laid her on the seat of the boat-house, and hurriedly said:

"This is a most unfortunate accident, for you are wet through, and we are far from the house. I am afraid you will take your death of cold, but you must remain here while I run to the house and send you assistance. It will never do for you to attempt to walk so far in those saturated clothes."

Nina arose, wrung the water from her long hair, and defiantly said:

"You can go if you choose, but I can and will walk back. If I take cold, and it strikes to my life, so much the better. I shall be out of your way, and you may thank your stars should it end so."

Fenton did not care to be the companion of her walk in her present mood, so he hurriedly replied:

"Perhaps it will be best for you to keep in motion. I will hasten on before you, and send some one to meet you with a dry shawl."

In another moment he was gone, and Nina wrung her hands in impotent anguish and fury. The grand *coup* had failed, and she felt herself utterly defeated. But she soon regained her presence of mind, and set out for the house. The wet garments impeded her steps, and the frosty air struck upon them, chilling her through every fibre of her frame.

Half way to the house, she met a servant carrying a heavy shawl for her. The wet one was removed, and the dry one carefully wrapped around her; but Nina did not derive from it any sensation of warmth, and, by the time she gained the steps, she was shivering with a severe chill.

She was taken to her room, her garments changed, and, after she was placed in bed, hot teas were pressed on her by the old negro nurse who had been summoned to her assistance. These she refused to taste, and asked for wine. This was sent up to her, and Mrs. Hastings followed, to remonstrate against its use, as fever would be sure to follow the chill.

Nina was obstinate, and would listen to no persuasions, so she was permitted to have her own way. She drank several glasses of port, and, under their influence, sank into an uneasy slumber.

From this she awoke in a burning fever; her intense excitement, followed by the sudden plunge into the cold water, had produced their legitimate effects, and Nina knew that she was becoming very ill.

In the evening, Mr. Hastings himself came to her bedside, accompanied by his daughter. He knew a little of medicine, and the alarm depicted on his face, as he looked on the burning cheeks and flashing eyes of the sufferer, proved that he feared the worst for her. He sadly asked:

"How could you be so imprudent as to go on the lake on such a day as this? It was very careless in Godfrey to let you fall in the water."

"Oh no, it was all my own fault. Pray don't blame Mr. Fenton, for I only was in fault. I am paying the penalty of my own folly, and I am afraid that I shall give you a great deal of trouble. Perhaps I shall die, and then you will forgive me for——"

The voice sank away into an inaudible murmur, and Mr. Hastings hurriedly said:

"You must be quiet now, Miss Gordon. I will send to Natchez for my family physician, for you must have the best medical advice without delay. I had no idea that I should find you so ill."

"Pray don't send for the doctor for me. I shall be very well to-morrow. Hagar can do all I require."

Opal leaned over her and took her hot hand in her own; but Nina quickly drew it away, and impatiently went on:

"All I need is rest. Just let me alone, and I shall do well enough."

Opal moved away, and left the room with her father. As he descended the stairs with set lips and clouded brow, his wife came into the hall. She eagerly asked:

"How did you find her? Oh dear, if [illegible] house when we are preparing for a great festival."

"Madam," he sternly replied, "this poor girl is thrown upon our kindness, and we must do the part of good Samaritans by her. I am afraid that she is very ill; in fact, I know she is, and everything else must give way when there is sickness in the house. If she grows worse, the wedding must be postponed; there will be no help for it."

Opal listened to his words with a sudden bound of the heart; and I am afraid the condition of Nina inspired her with but one feeling—that of gladness in the temporary release her illness afforded herself from the fate that so nearly approached her. Day by day her reluctance to become the wife of Fenton deepened and intensified till she almost felt as if any catastrophe that averted such a doom would be welcome.

Opal did not believe Nina to be in actual danger, or she would scarcely have rejoiced in the illness which, at best, could only afford her temporary freedom from the yoke she knew she must some day assume.

CHAPTER XLIII.

Fenton had put on a suit of Mr. Hastings' clothes, been laughed at in them, and had then insisted on returning home to shake off the effects of his cold bath there.

In truth, he did not care to remain with his betrothed, with the chance that Nina might recover sufficiently to come down and join them before the day was over. He wished to reflect on what had passed between them, and make up his mind as to whether it would be advisable to inform Mr. Hastings of the discovery she was persuaded she had made. He had not before been aware that Fairlie was a part of Mr. Hastings' name, and Fenton believed her suspicion to be well founded.

He recalled that gentleman's agitation when speaking of this girl; the admission that a tie of blood connected her with himself; and Fenton thought it possible that Nina might be as nearly related to Mr. Hastings as she asserted herself to be. Yet why should such a mystery be made of it? Surely it would have been much better to receive her in her true character, and present her to society as his niece, than to bring her beneath his roof in this underhand manner.

Look at it as he would, it was a puzzle that he could not unravel, and Fenton finally concluded to say nothing on the subject.

On the following day he was slightly feverish, and he sent over a note to Opal, excusing his non-appearance and inquiring after Miss Gordon.

The servant came back with a few lines from his betrothed, informing him that Dr. Wiseman had been sent for, and he declared Nina to be in the preliminary stages of an attack of pneumonia, which threatened to be very violent.

In the afternoon Fenton went over to Silvermere accompanied by his mother, as Mrs. Markland wished to ascertain what effect the state of affairs there would have on the approaching marriage. The invitations had not yet been issued, and she greatly feared that it might become necessary to defer it.

Mrs. Markland's worst fears were confirmed; for Nina had grown steadily worse, and was now delirious. She was already pronounced in a most critical state, and all thoughts of festivity must be given up in that house in which the King of Terrors might soon enter.

Mrs. Markland faintly suggested a private marriage; but to this Mr. Hastings would not listen. He was pale and stern, and decisively said that his daughter should not marry and go away from her home while the shadow of death lingered over it. It would not be long to wait, for the fate of the poor girl up stairs must be decided in a few days. So Mrs. Markland went back to Magnolia, gloomy and half angry that this insignificant stranger should come between herself and the fruition of her dearest hopes.

She could not understand why Mr. Hastings was so deeply depressed by her condition, and she resented the contented expression of Opal's face when she assured her that the bridal must be deferred.

So the days passed on, and Nina grew worse from hour to hour. At length she lay pallid and exhausted on her bed, seeming scarcely to breathe, and Dr. Wiseman pronounced his final opinion to Mr. Hastings:

"I cannot save her. Young and strong as she is, the disease is too much for her. Life barely lingers now, and before the dawn of another day she will be dead."

These words of doom were spoken to the restless and anxious man whose wretchedness during the progress of this illness could not be concealed, and his evident suffering had aroused in the breast of his wife all the furies of jealousy.

For the last two days she had scarcely come near Nina herself, though Opal gave her every attention that a sister could have bestowed. As the words of Dr. Wiseman fell on his ears, Mr. Hastings looked down on the sunken features with an expression of deep anguish, and in a broken voice, said:

"So young—so fair! Oh, Doctor, can you not do something yet to rescue this life? Use all your skill, for I—I take a deep interest in the poor child; and if she can be saved, I know that you can accomplish it."

Marvelling at the emotion which shook his frame, the physician gravely replied:

"I have done all that was possible. She is a beautiful creature; but she must go in her youth; there is no hope left."

"No hope—*no hope*," repeated Mr. Hastings mechanically as he followed the retreating form of the doctor; and after he was gone, the unhappy man went into the library, locked himself in, and paced the floor, muttering to himself:

"No hope—no hope! Oh, my God! why is this punishment sent to me? After all these years in which I so carefully prepared her for the position that was to give her a home near me, she is to be snatched from me. Now, when I hoped to have her all to myself, death—inexorable death—comes to wrest her from me. Oh, Lord, I have been a wretched sinner, and I merit the chastisement; but she, the innocent one, should not be made the offering for my guilt."

For the first time for many years, Mr. Hastings knelt down and fervently prayed that this cup might pass from him. Calmed by his devotions, he arose and again ascended the stairs, and moved toward Nina's chamber, there he firmly believed to take his last farewell of her.

The house was perfectly still. Opal, worn out with watching, had been ordered to bed by Dr. Wiseman, and only the old woman, Hagar, was in the sick room. She was lying back in a large chair by the fire, and Nina lay motionless and nearly lifeless upon the bed. The nurse believed that nothing more could be done for her patient, so she went comfortably to sleep, expecting to find her dead when she woke up again.

Mr. Hastings took up the lamp, and passing it to and fro before the eyes of the sleeping woman, satisfied himself that her slumbers were too profound to be broken by anything that might pass near her. He then replaced the light in such a position as to throw its glare over the pale form upon the bed.

In an agony of emotion he knelt down, took one of Nina's passive hands in his own, and pressed it tenderly to his lips. He felt it [illegible] to his touch, and [illegible] child, speak to me [illegible] again. Do not die without the knowledge of who you are—what you are to me. Oh, my daughter, my daughter, lift those closed eyelids, and look once more upon your guilty and most wretched father, for such indeed I am."

That Nina had heard and partially understood him was evident, for her eyelids quivered, slowly unclosed, and she faintly asked:

"Who are you? What—what did you say? I—I am so weak that I have no power to think. Give me something to drink."

Mr. Hastings arose, took from the table a cup in which some stimulating drops were mixed, and held it to her lips. With some effort she swallowed a small portion, and sank back as helpless as an infant. He thought she was dying, and, overcome by the passion of woe that filled his breast, the wretched man took her in his arms, and pressing her fondly to his heart, called her by every endearing name he could think of in that hour of supreme anguish.

"Nina—mine, my own, my eldest born; child of her I loved with all the passion of my heart; of her I so deeply wronged; awake to life again! Let me repay you for the suffering I inflicted on your mother. Oh, my daughter, my beautiful one, my adored darling, I cannot—cannot give you up thus! God will not punish me so severely as to take you from me just as I had brought you to my side. How I have yearned for your sweet face near me I can never tell; and just as I had accomplished all I labored for, you will leave me to desolation and despair. I cannot give you up! Oh, Nina, live—live for my sake, for your loss will leave me a broken-hearted man."

This passionate outburst had the effect of fully arousing Nina from the state of semi-consciousness in which she had lain for hours. It gave her the impulse she needed to save her from sinking into the grave that was yawning to receive her. The sluggish blood was aroused to new action, and life and consciousness began to return. She feebly said:

"Is it you, Mr. Hastings? Why are you here? Why do you hold me in your arms thus? and tears are raining on my face. What does it all mean?"

"It means that I am too wretched to maintain any longer the reserve that has existed between us. Know me as your father, Nina; your erring but repentant father, who will be to you all that a parent should be, if God in his infinite mercy will only spare you to me. My daughter, my darling, let me press my lips to yours once while you recognize the strong and tender tie that binds us together."

Nina's eyes again unclosed, and fixed themselves with an expression of intelligence upon the agitated face that bent over her. Mr. Hastings saw that she understood him, and he kissed her again and again on cheek, lips, and brow, while her whole being seemed to gain new life from the shock she had received. The reaction the physician had pronounced hopeless had fully commenced, and, with a happy smile, she faintly murmured:

"Lay me back upon my pillows, father, for as such I know you now. Watch with me through the night, for if I die I wish you to be near me; but I shall not die—I *will not* die—now that I know that one heart will be wrung with anguish for my loss."

Again he kissed her, then replaced her comfortably upon her bed, and made her take a few more of the restorative drops. He sat down beside her, holding her wasted hand in his own, with his fingers pressed lightly on her pulse, counting each feeble throb with the dread that it might prove the last.

Nina slept fitfully, and at intervals her eyes unclosed to find that anxious face watching her with an anguish of solicitude depicted upon it, such as only those may feel who watch the fluctuating life in the form of one unutterably dear.

As the hours waned, Mr. Hastings felt the feeble thread of life grow stronger, and hope began to spring up in his heart. In spite of the physician's assertion that all chance of recovery was over, he believed that she would live. Live to bless him he fondly thought.

Ah! if he could have looked into the future, he would have thanked God for taking her then; but that was veiled; and the curse of a granted prayer was his, for he prayed almost without ceasing through those awful hours that Nina might be spared to him; and not once did he say, 'Not my will but thine be done, oh Lord.'"

At dawn his gray hair was nearly white, blanched by the wild throes of anguish and doubt that shook his being to its very centre through those long hours of watching; but he had his reward.

Nina lived on; the morning light found her stronger, and able to take a small portion of nourishment. Dr. Wiseman came out expecting to find her dead; but, to his surprise, one of those inexplicable reactions had taken place in his patient which sometimes set at naught all the prognostics of medical skill. He regarded Nina's recovery as almost a resurrection from the grave; and he now assured her father that with care he believed she would be restored to health.

The physician's visits continued several days longer, but Nina's elastic constitution soon triumphed over weakness, and she recovered as rapidly as she had grown ill.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

APHORISM.—The appearance of vice is always more easily assumed by the virtuous than the appearance of virtue by the vicious; as it is evidently much easier to become bad when we are good than good when we are bad. Understanding, sensibility, talents, genius, virtue, religion, may with much greater facility be lost than acquired. The best may descend as low as they please, but the worst cannot ascend to the height they might wish.

—True generosity rises above the ordinary rules of social conduct, and flows with much too full a stream to be comprehended within the precise marks of formal precepts. It sanctifies every passion, and adds grace to every acquisition of the soul; and if it does not necessarily include, at least it reflects, a lustre upon the whole circle of moral and intellectual qualities.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

ORANGE BLOSSOMS

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

Sweet the thought that orange blossoms
In the evening, noon or morn,
With their innocent, pure beauty
Should the joyous bride adorn.

They prefigure all the virtues,
Applicable—may from souls
Only fit for chosen guests—
That should sparkle in the soul.

All the year the leaves are emerald;
White and fragrant are the flowers;
Fruits fall grown and yet some others
Always hang in all the bowers.

Type of beauty, tree of splendor,
Tree with meaning so divine,
Surely then wert ty kine Rainbow!
For the sacred angelic shrine!

O, then always may thy blossoms,
Blushingly from the wedded bride,
Weave the garlands by Religion
Given to her glad, true wife!

SCRAPS OF ADVENTURE.

FROM AN OLD SAILOR'S LOG-BOOK.

No. XXV.

By STEVANUS CORD, Jr.

HISTORICAL INCIDENTS—A SERIAL.

The Strait of Gibraltar is from nine to forty-seven miles in width; and its length, from Cape Trafalgar to Europa Point, is about fifty miles. The grandest width lies between Trafalgar, on the Spanish coast, and Spartel, on the African—twenty-four miles; and the narrowest part is the narrow point; while between Europa Point and the opposite coast of Africa, the distance is not far from fifteen miles. We had an entirely wind setting our eastward, and a strong current of at least four knots setting up in our favor, enabled us to make short work upon our tacks, and helped us wonderfully. By reasons have probably all heard of the current which flows continually into the Mediterranean from the Atlantic through the Straits of Gibraltar. This current is broad, and strong, and deep, and I have been in it when I knew it was with a speed of at least five miles an hour,—and that was near the middle of the narrowest part. There are two slight counter-currents, setting to the westward, near the shores,—but their capacity to return the matter poured in by the central current is very slight. It is supposed the phenomenon of the perpetual pouring of water from the sea into the ocean, I agree with those who think it is carried off by evaporation. In no places in the world have I ever seen such heavy dews as in the Mediterranean. During a summer night, while lying at anchor in the harbor of Port Mahon, I have known the dew to fall so heavily as to run in large streams off the decks and rigging, and sheets to drop pools in the depressions of the hammock-cloths. I am aware that what I vast surface is exposed to the evaporative tendency of the atmosphere, and that for these copious dews, there could be no such small supply from shores as would be of any note for, during the summer months, but very little rain indeed, and, though that little may stagger the lands from artificial wells, yet this kind of irrigation cannot furnish that moisture which the foliage must have if it is to live and thrive.

Those who would refer to these copious dews as assisting in the great central flow, are entirely overcome by the very first proposition: What causes the following current? Of course it could not have been originally caused by the waters running one at the other. It must have been, and is now, by reason of the extraction of the waters of the sea by some operation far distant from the Straits. And then again, I know that these side currents are very slight, and, though some writers of good authority are disposed to set them down as regular currents flowing from the sea into the ocean, I am inclined to consider them as nothing more than the mere settling of the waters of the sea into an unsettled state, caused by the violent passage of the waters. Were the Straits narrowed at its entrance and widened in the middle twenty, there would be none of this side current; but, being the reverse,—the central current meeting as an embouchure four-and-twenty miles wide, then rushing into a space not exceeding the sea at a strait of fifteen miles,—of course there would somewhere be counter-currents and I think I may challenge dispute when I say that the water required to fill the Atlantic by these "side-currents" never reached the Mediterranean sea.

So much for the famed current, which has excreated the interest and the philosophical curiosity of men of all stations, classes, and ages.

We had just made a tack, and were standing over towards the African coast, when Jack Hilyer raised his finger towards a point on the land sea-ward, and said:

"Look there, Cord, d'ye see that?"

"Where?"

"Right, my boy," he cried, with real emotion. "On the twenty-first day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and five, I was on board Lord Nelson's ship, the Victory. Talk of fighting! Ah, my boy, ye ought to've been there. O' bear, darlings, the Victory, Nelson aboard of the line and four frigates; and the French and Spaniards had thirty-three sail of the line and seven frigates. Just think of it, Cord,—we had thirty-one ships and four, and they forty; sailin' in all seventy-one ships, counting the frigates. Nelson knew that he must be outdone if he'd see the enemy had the most ships and the heaviest guns. So Nelson knew he must be clever, sharp' fast and to do the work. He plan was to divide our force into tail to tail, each nearly when he started to bring his ships into action. He meant to break right into the centre, an shoved, every one, pooour in the broadside as he passed through. It was simple, and confuse was alone they could trouble him. When all was ready, and the ships in line was bearing down, he run up this signal, which every one of the fleet could see, every one, for all he didn't:

"My soul, old boy! Look! What a shootin' there was when that signal was read off to the crews. It never can forget, Nelson's men knew what it meant. But Nelson fell—He went into action with his full admiral's uniform on, and on his left breast he wore his bright orders, shinin' an' glitterin' like stars. They tried to get him to take off that coat, an' put on a common jacket; but he wouldn't listen. 'I'll die—I gather,' he'd answer, 'and in better fit die in 'em!' But what his officers feared really happened. The sharpshooters killed him, for he was picked off by a musketeer. Howsomever, he gained gained the victory, an' Nelson lived long enough to know it. Even of the enemy's ship had surrendered. Ye gods! what a roarin' of cannon there was on that day! Greenfish in half full of the maimed an lost limbs in that battle, and you'll find many on 'em, too, as feel their hunger from the berserk thunders' of the guns.

"Do ever ye hear how Lord Nelson was buried?"

I told Jack I had not.

"Ye've heerd of the battle o' the Nile, where Admiral Nelson destroyed Napoleon's fleet, eh?"

"Yes," I told him,—I had heard of that.

"Well," resumed Jack, "the French admiral's name was Brueys, an' he was blowed up during the engagement. Well, one of Nelson's friends—Collingwood, I believe—got a piece of the Admiral's mast, an' had a coffin made of it, an this coffin he gave to be buried with Lord Nelson left London for that last evolve he went to his sailor-home—the one he was born in. He had a splendid funeral. Ye see, Nelson was the greatest naval commander of the Mediterranean that I ever knew, an' he was high as hand. Nelson had spoke his thoughts to Fleity; I told him I spoke my thoughts to Fleity; I told him I spoke my thoughts to Fleity; I told him I spoke my